# ARCHITE



standard

contents

every issue does not necessarily contain all these contents, but they are the regular features which continually recur.

and COMMENT

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A glossary of abbreviations of Government Departments and Societies and Committees of all kinds, together with their full address and telephone numbers. The glossary is published in two parts—A to Ie one week, Ig to Z the next. In all cases where the town is not mentioned the word LONDON is implicit in the address

Institution of Gas Engineers. 17, Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.1. Sloane 8266
Institution of Heating and Ventilating Engineers. 75, Eaton Place, S.W.1. Sloane 3158/1601 IHVE

IIBD Incorporated Institute of British Decorators. Drayton House, Gordon Street, Euston 2450 W.C.1.

Institute of Landscape Architects. 12, Gower Street, W.C.1.
Institute of Arbitrators. 35/37, Hastings House, 10, Norfolk Street, Museum 1783 ILA I of Arb.

Temple Bar 4071 Strand, W.C.2. Institute of Builders. 48, Bedford Square, W.C.1. Museum 7197/5176
Institute of Refrigeration. Dalmeny House, Monument Street, E.C.3. Avenue 6851 IOB IR Institute of Registered Architects. 47, Victoria Street, S.W.1. Abbey 6172
Institution of Structural Engineers. 11, Upper Belgrave Street, S.W.1. Sloane 7128
Inland Waterways Association. 11, Gower Street, W.C.1. Museum 9200 IRA ISE IWA LIDC Lead Industries Development Council. Eagle House, Jermyn Street, S.W.1

Whitehall 7264/4175 London Master Builders' Association. 47, Bedford Square, W.C.1. Muset MARS Group (English Branch of CIAM). Secretary: Gontran Goulden, Building Centre, 26, Store Street, W.C.1. Muset Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. 55, Whitehall, S.W.1. Whiteh LMBA Museum 3891 MARS

Museum 5400 Whitehall 3400 MOA Ministry of Education. Curzon Street House, Curzon Street, W.1. Ministry of Health. 23, Saville Row, W.1. Mayfair 9400 Regent 8411 MOE MOH Ministry of Housing and Local Government. MOHLG Whitehall, S.W.1. Whitehall 4300 Ministry of Labour and National Service, 8, St. James' Square, S.W.1. Whitehall 6200
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Fedinburgh 20396
Edinburgh 20396 PEP RCA RIAS

RIBA Royal Institute of British Architects. 66, Portland Place, W.1. Langham 5721 Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. 12, Great George St., S.W.1. Whitehall 5322/9242 RICS

Royal Fine Art Commission. 22A, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.1. Royal Society. Burlington House, Piccadilly, W.1. Royal Society of Arts. 6, John Adam Street, W.C.2. Royal Sanitary Institute. 90, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1. Rural Industries Bureau. 35, Camp Road, Wimbledon, S.W.19. RFAC Whitehall 3935 Regent 3335 RSA Trafalgar 2366 Sloane 5134 RSI Wimbledon 5101

RIB Society of British Paint Manufacturers. Grosvenor Gardens House, Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.1. **SBPM** 

Victoria 2186 SCR Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR. 14, Kensington Square, London, W.8. Western 1571

Society of Engineers. 17, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.1. Abbey 7244 School Furniture Manufacturers' Association. 30, Cornhill, London, E.C.3. SE SFMA

Structural Insulation Association. 14, Moorgate, London, E.C.2.
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Timber Development Association. 21, College Hill, E.C.4. City 4
The Gas Council. 1, Grosvenor Place, S.W.1. Sloane 4
Town Planning Institute. 18, Ashley Place, S.W.1. Victoria 8
Timber Trades Federation. 69, Cannon Street, E.C.4.
War Damage Commission. Devonshire House, Mayfair Place, Piccadilly, W.1. Sloane 4554 TGC TPI . Victoria 8815 WDC

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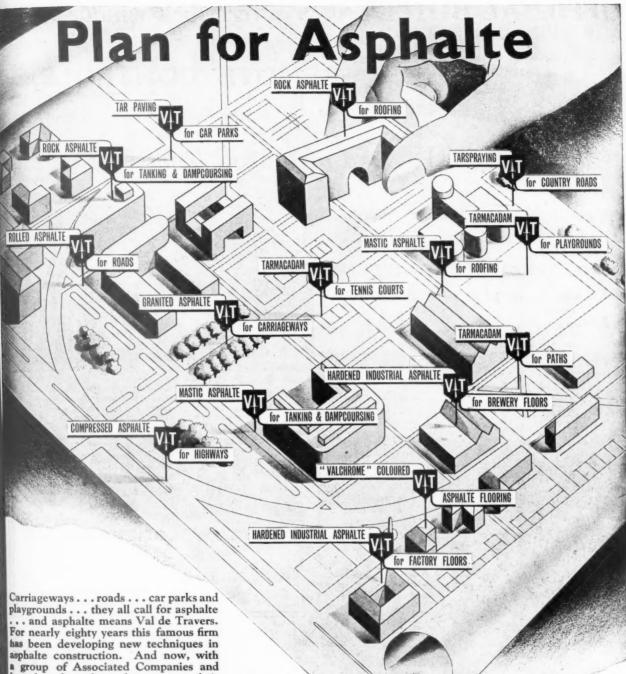
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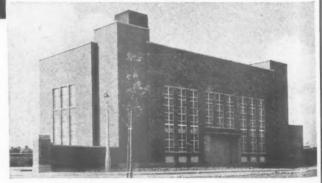


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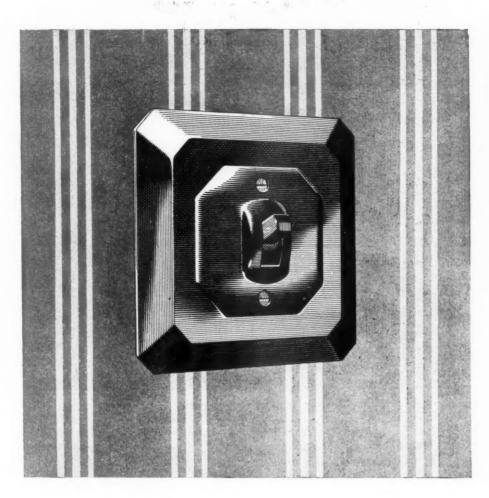
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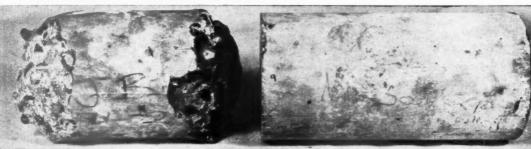


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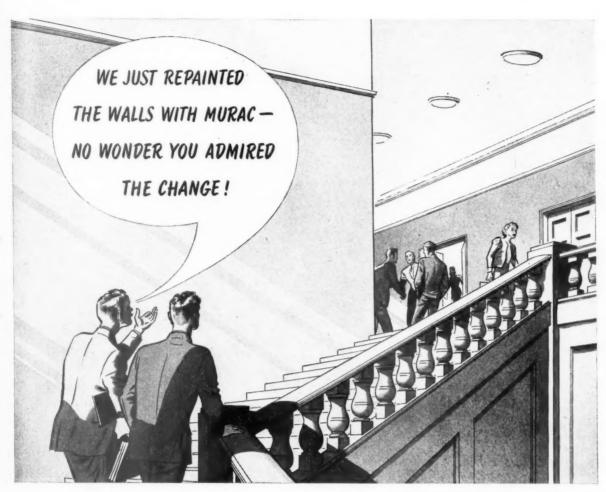
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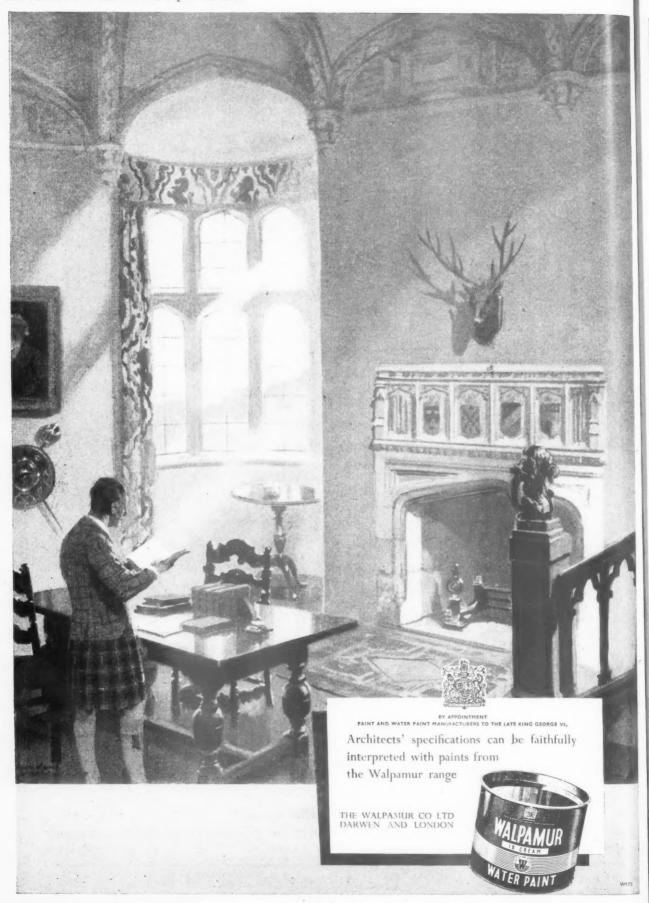
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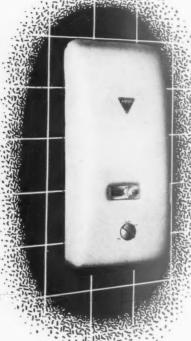
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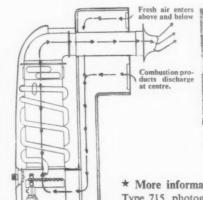
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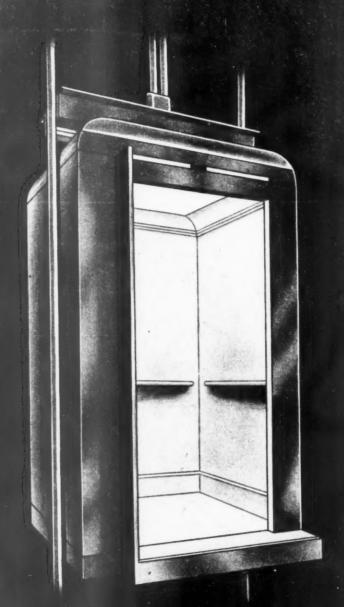
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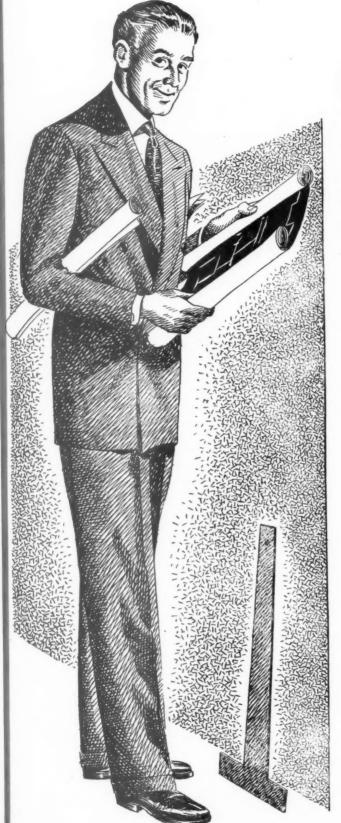




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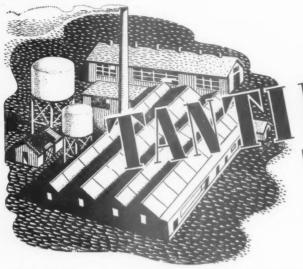


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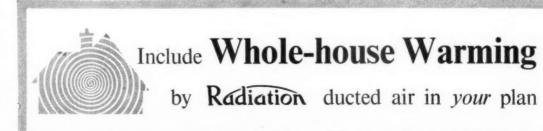
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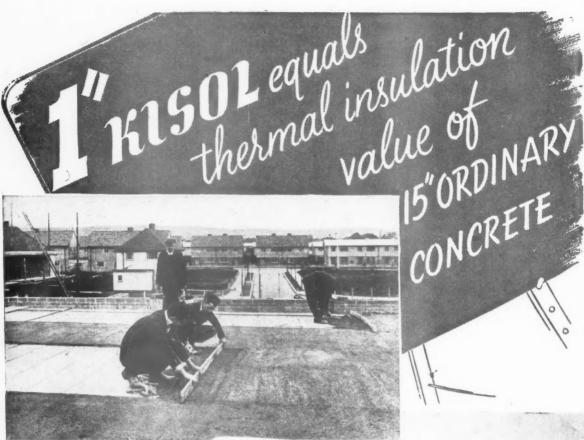
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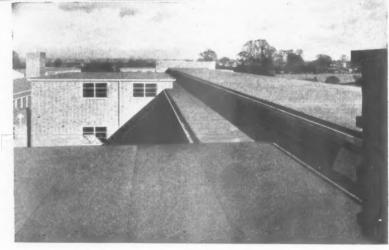
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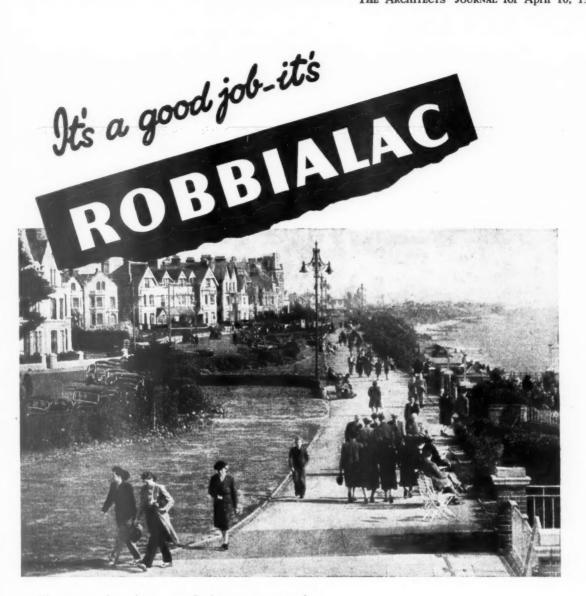
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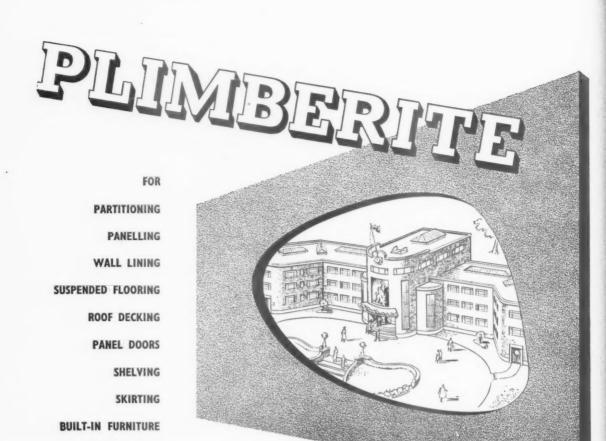
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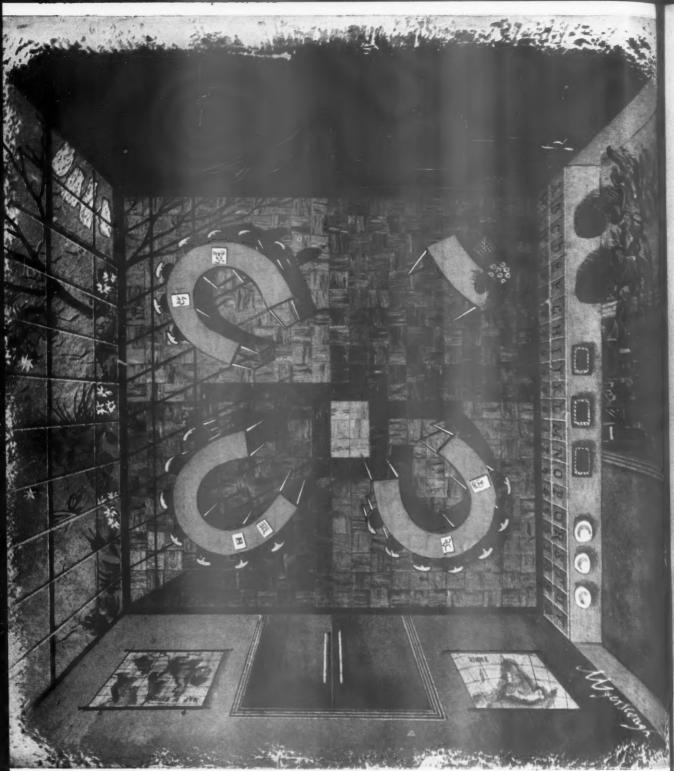
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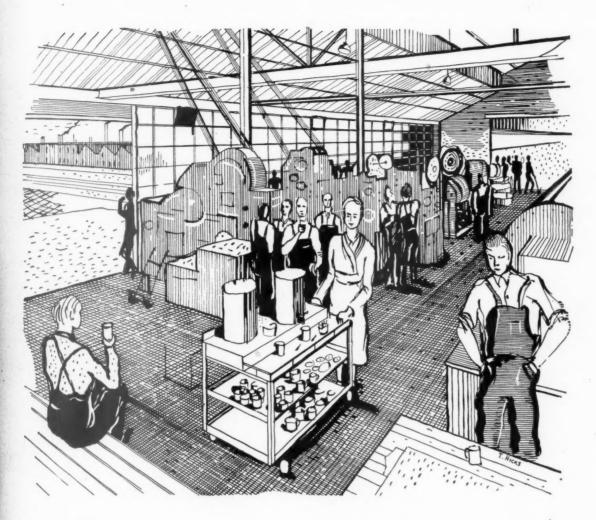


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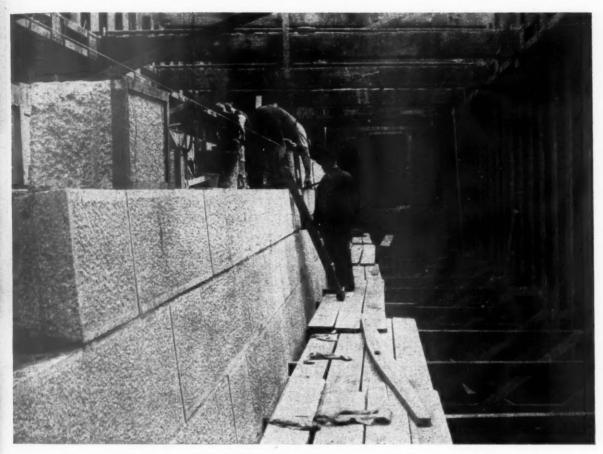
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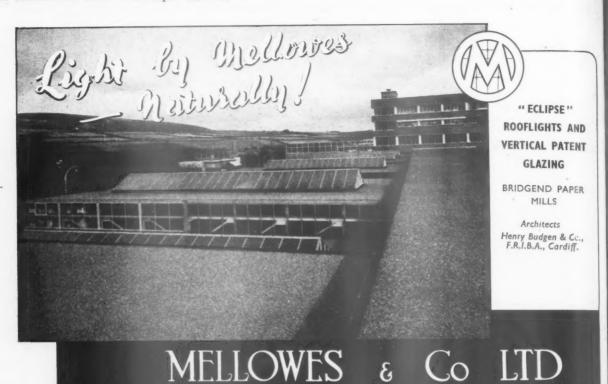
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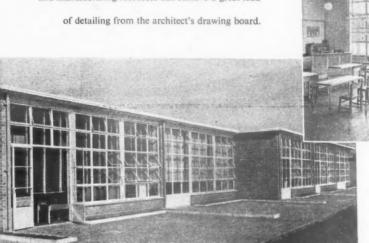


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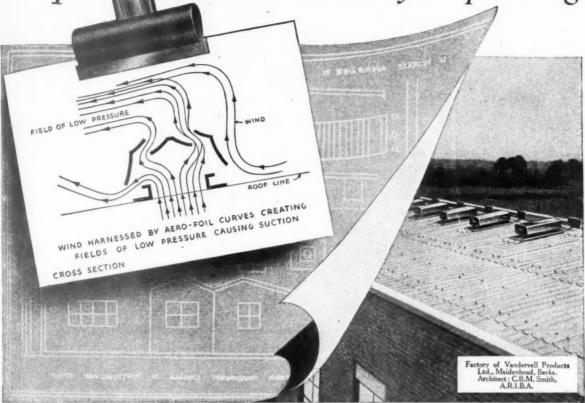
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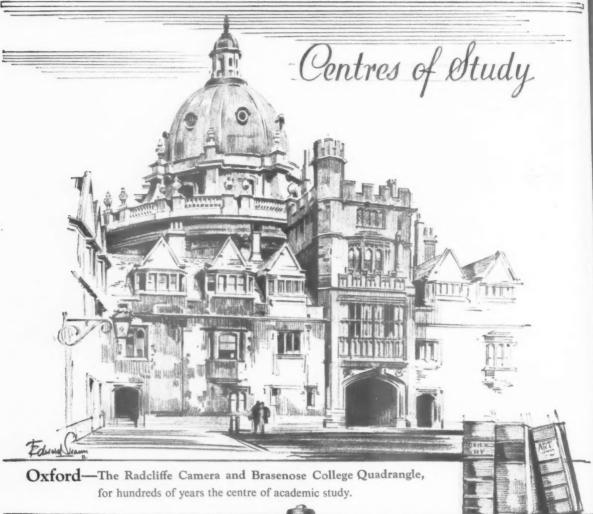
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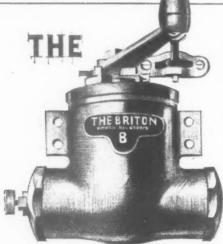
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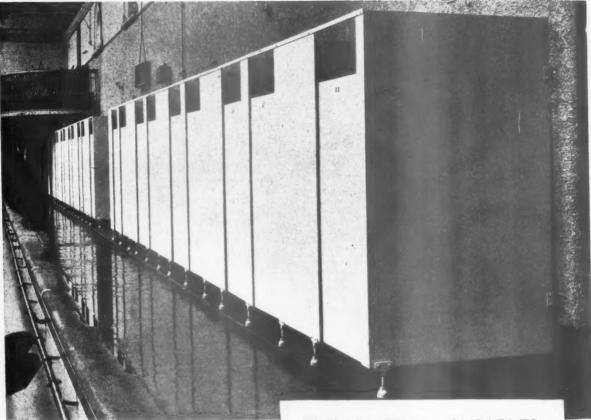
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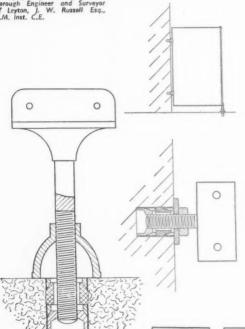
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BEDFORD SQUARE DANCE

The AA annual reception has a character all its own-extraordinarily different from the RIBA reception, though each is an agreeable occasion of its kind. In Bedford Square, as is appropriate to the less formal body, there are fewer ashtrays hung round plump but elderly necks; more high spirits and a more lively round of entertainments. Youth still seems to be at the helm, though on Thursday there was a large number, too, of relatively elderly gentlemen like ASTRAGAL who recall with nostalgia the old days when this event was known as the conversazione because they are now too stiff in the joints to do much except talk.

This year the side-shows were up to the best standard, with specially high

marks given to the uniforms of the Royal Artillery band, the display of books about Eastern architecture in the library, the decorations of the bar in the basement, and the beautifully presented exhibition upstairs of AA and RCA students' work. Anthony Chitty was a suave and hospitable host. There is nothing more to say that ASTRAGAL didn't say last year and the year before and the year before that. And who would have it otherwise?

#### AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE

So much of the talk about architecture in the Press and over the air takes the form of generalization that it was a great pleasure to listen to Ian McCallum's talk last week, analysing and criticizing a particular building in real detail. Because getting down to brass tacks (or in this case planning grids and aluminium wall-frames) is clearly the right way of arousing interest in buildings.

The public is much more ready to listen to technical matters than it is generally given credit for-and much more capable of understanding them. Witness its ready connoisseurship of motor-cars and radio-sets, a connoisseurship based on considerable technical understanding. McCallum ran over the points of the UN Secretariat much as one might those of a new make of car-analysing its design and assessing its performance. It must have made a lot of listeners realize for the first time how exciting a subject architecture can be, regarded simply as the application of imagination to the resources of science.

Let us have more talks as realistic as well as perceptive as this one. It may be that in England we haven't many

modern buildings yet that deserve such close-range attention as the UN Secretariat. On the other hand, discussion of architecture that treats the public as adult is one way to get them.

#### WORK FOR THE ARCHITECT?

No comment seems to have been aroused by the MOH & LG circular 28/52 which, briefly, recommends local authorities to use more non-traditional houses, and offers an increased housing allocation to those who do. Just a few more houses, one imagines, that the architect won't be asked to design, though, presumably, we may still be able to have a hand in the layouts. And what if the estate is then awarded one of Mr. Bevan's housing medals? Who gets it, the architect or the fabricator?

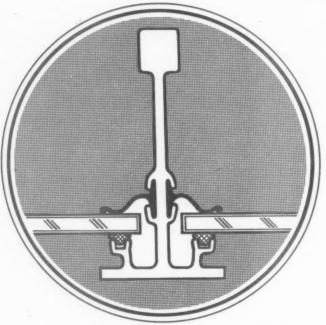
#### WHO WAS HOAXED?

ASTRAGAL'S morning paper, or one of them, featured the atom bomb patent which succeeded in hoaxing the police. Although the various mis-spellings ought to have given the whole game away at once, the police were, perhaps, right to play for safety. The real joke seems to be on the Harwell boys, who have had built up for them such a reputation that the public believes anything. If only someone had seen a bearded man with snow on his . . . but hush, the dailies need no help from a poor old weekly columnist like me.

#### TIMBER CHIMNEY

The photo overleaf (sent to me by a Tyrone reader) shows a piece of chimney construction which may amuse some of you. Apparently this was the standard Irish method 200 years or so ago. The hearth opening (peat fires, of course) was spanned by an adzed timber beam about 6 in. square on which the rough "rod" framing rested. Plas-

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It is now possible to dispel rumours that there was a serious leakage from 9, Queen Anne's Gate, last week. It is true that when the art editor of The Architectural Review was dealing with his morning post in the usual way on April 1 (top left) he found in one parcel several samples of the vocabulary of floorscape. And it is true that although there were some obvious mistakes in the handling of that vocabulary, he promptly began an examination of texture (top right). Several questions were, in fact, raised in the house. Was this, it was asked, a challenge from rivals who had mastered the vernacular? More important, were the cobbles and the grid genuine? The answer may be found in the photograph on the right. This was taken especially to confirm that although the symbols used were not false in themselves they combined to form an effect that can only be described as Inarticulation. "Just a stupid schoolgirl's joke," said one of the investigating experts to ASTRAGAL.



tering with mud and cow dung to a thickness of 8 in. or so produced a tapering flue which ended in a small timber platform on which a short brick stack was built, presumably to protect the thatched roof from the heat.

As with so many constructions of this kind, it is fairly safe to bet that it works adequately, but it would be fun to try it on the Fire Offices Committee. No doubt it would be put in a special category as "liable to spontaneous combustion."

#### STUDENTS TO BE CERTIFIED

A reader has sent me some startling information about the RIBA's new ruling on students' admission to associateship. Apparently those who are about to start their post-training year of practical experience will have to take their employers a form to fill in. This form incorporates a "Certificate of Practical Building Experience" which the employer will be expected to sign, confirming that the student has had practical building experience and has done satisfactory work. But that's



A 200-year old method of chimney construction in Ireland. See note on previous page.



No Longer Abstract

Eighteen months or so ago, when the Journal published a series of reports on the new towns, it was only possible to present abstract studies of them. Although they had been conceived four years earlier they were little more than ideas on paper. But in recent months enough progress has been made for some assessment to be made of the ultimate character of the towns. Aerial views of six of them are published in this week's Journal, including Harlow, the

largest of the new towns, where the photograph above was taken. (The sculpture, as many readers will recognize, is Barbara Hepworth's "Contrapuntal Forms," which stood, during the Festival of Britain, on the podium of the Dome of Discovery.) No attempt has been made to criticize the layout and development of the new towns, but it is hoped that this will be done in a subsequent series of articles by D. Rigby Childs, the writer of this week's survey.

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not all. The employer will also have to fill in a page and a half of details about the practical experience gained by the student, under such headings as Surveys, Negotiations, Designs, Approximate Estimates, Contract Drawings, Details, Specifications and Supervision on Sites. And the student will be told that it is his job to see that he gets the forms of experience required and that his employer completes the certificate.

My correspondent says he considers this to be an impertinence not only to the student, who will now have to get the consent of an employer before being allowed to sit for his final examination, but also to the employer who is to be badgered into filling up the form. Certainly no architect will be pleased to have another form to complete. But that will not irritate him nearly as much as hearing from his assistant that, after eleven months, he still has not negotiated with authorities, drawn up a specification, or placed a contract.

No doubt many students will feel like inquiring just how many of those responsible for the introduction of this form had such wide practical experience themselves within their first year of graduation. But what really interests me is what is going to happen if an employer refuses to sign the certificate. And what will happen to the student who isn't able to get experience of all the forms of experience required of him? If he only needs experience of a few of the many aspects of architectural office work why should there be any need for a form at all? Maybe this is simply an example of the attitude of mind behind a recent newspaper advertisement: "Experience essential, but not neces-

I agree with my correspondent that if a certificate must be issued before the professional practice examination is taken, the onus for getting it should not be placed upon the student. And certainly the certificate—if required—should be the *only* thing required of his employer. After all, the student's knowledge and understanding of professional practice will be tested soon enough by examination.

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ASTRAGAL

#### POINTS FROM THIS ISSUE

Progress in the New Towns......pages 444, 445, and 449

Non-traditional building encouraged by MOHLG ...pages 441 and

447

Students to receive "practical" certificates.....page 443

Authorities asked to review housing equipment.....page 447

The Editors

#### PROGRESS IN THE NEW TOWNS

THE new town corporations must have been conscious for some time that their work was being watched with interest both in this country and overseas. Not only are they agents for carrying out one of the great social ventures of this century, but they are in the unique position of being temporary authorities set up in isolation in the midst of the recognized territories of permanent local authorities. But if these corporations have been the cynosure of all eyes in the world of architecture and planning in the past they are rapidly becoming the object of even greater vigilance and criticism.

For almost five years we had to be content with watching the fashioning of the new towns on paper. Now, at last, we can see some indications of what their character will be when they are completed. Some hints of the ultimate appearance of six of them can be obtained from the aerial photographs, recently taken, published on pages 449 to 455. In an accompanying article, D. Rigby Childs comments on progress made to date in these areas.

Does it look as though these new towns are going to be all that we hoped for? Will each—or any— of the development corporations have created a new and original environment, satisfactory in conception and detail? Or will the results of their work be little better than improved and up-to-date versions of pre-war suburban development? Those questions cannot be answered solely with the evidence provided by the photographs published this week. But the JOURNAL will later deal with each town in turn and, with the aid of pictures of work completed, will attempt to assess their qualities.

There are, of course, no accepted standards by which the achievements of the new town corporations can be gauged. Would not the creation of such a standard by an established authority, working possibly within the frame-work of the powers of Expanded Towns Bill, lead to valuable results? The LCC, for instance, as the world's largest housing authority, is in a powerful position to create a neighbourhood first class in conception and detail. Surely this authority, which had the vision to initiate Lansbury, could be encouraged to make a contribution to solving its own housing problems by building in a country area an experimental neighbourhood representing the more advanced aspects of housing design.

Ronald S. Harvey, A.R.I.B.A.

City Architects Dept., Coventry

R. P. Slocombe

P. G. Beresford, A.R.I.B.A.

#### Architects' Salaries

SIR,—The salary level of local authority architects, and, for that matter, of assistant architects in private practice, is inexorably linked with the status of the profession as a whole. This fact has been brought into glaring prominence by the recent salaries award to doctors whereby it appears that they are able to command anything from two to three times the salaries of their architect opposite numbers.

A great many of us, and especially those who qualified immediately before or after the recent war cannot, through sheer financial stringency, if for no other reason, remain content to believe that our present low salary scale is a just one. We therefore look to the RIBA or, if Neil Martin-Kaye insists, to the RIBA and IRA together, to show some exidence of their efforts to improve the situation. If such evidence is not forthcoming, as would appear to be the case, we are bound to assume either that they have made no effort on our behalf or, that they are faced with the prospect that our professional prestige does not warrant a fight for a higher salary scale.

I imagine the latter is nearer the mark and though it seems that little can be done to reduce the présent overcrowding of the profession in relation to the work it is now called upon to perform, presumably the RIBA is in a position to so regulate, by examination, the quantity and quality of newcomers to the profession as to ensure that they at least will be able to command the salary our long training justifies.

RONALD S. HARVEY.

SIR,—The letter from Messrs. Duncan, Brown & Jack was pertinent, and recent increases in salaries of members of the medical profession show quite clearly what a vigorous and progressive professional associa-

tion can do for its members. The statement in the letter that skilled and unskilled operatives often receive considerably higher weekly pay than the architect in charge of the project is lamentably true, and such a situation would precipitate action by a professional body interested in the status of the majority of its members. Compared with the BMA the efforts of the RIBA since the war are negligible, and the reason for its indifference is generally known, regretted and accepted as irrevocable by the majority of the profession, the majority being salaried employees of central and local governments and in private architects' offices.

The apathy of the RIBA is deliberate, the policy of a council interested in the preservation of private practice for the few and consisting mainly of private employers, their inactivity is quite understandable—employers do not advocate raising employees wages when it affects their pockets. \*\*

Mr. Martin Kaye's attempt to offer a solution is commendable, but his method undesirable. His suggestion that the RIBA is a learned society, above action for the financial betterment of its members, is utter nonsense. It has produced and revised the scale of professional charges, which makes certain that the private practice minority have fees which rise with the cost of building and the general cost of living. Joining another institution is senseless. There are too many doing too little and costing too much already.

The remedy lies in the hands of the

The remedy lies in the hands of the majority, and redemption of the RIBA from its present stagnation is constitutional. It salaried architects took an interest in their local societies and made certain of representation by salaried architects on local committees and the RIBA council by voting only for salaried men and withholding votes for architects in private practice, a new and virile institution could be created.

In view of the fact that the council of the RIBA has a majority of Fellows, it is the duty of all salaried architects who are eligible for election to this class of membership, to take the added responsibility and act rather than talk apologetically of the effete RIBA. It is also the duty of all members to vote intelligently and to see that salaried architects are well represented on the governing body of their professional and learned society.

W. AMCOTTS (A), J. C. BARKER (A),
C. BORNAT (A), J. C. BROWN (A),
G. A. COLE-EVANS (A), A. G.
DAVIDSON (A), A. W. H. DUNCANJONES (A), G. A. GREY (A), W. A.
JAMES (A), D. B. JOY (L), J. K.
MCKAY (A), F. MOATE (A), G. H.
MORRIS (L), D. L. O'CONNOR (A),
F. M. O'CONNOR (A), P. T. POWELL
(A), H. O. ROBERTS (A), W. G.
SEALEY (A), R. E. SWIFT (A),
E. C. TORY (A), A. R. WALKER (A),
C. M. WALKER (A), R. H. WILLIAMS
(A), D. J. CHALK (S), DIPL. ARCH.
BIRM., C. C. H. CHAPMAN (S),
W. G. MANN (S), M. H. NEWIN (S),
B. J. SEAMAN (S), D. M. TAYLOR
(S).

CITY ARCHITECTS DEPARTMENT, Coventry.

#### Costs to Consumer

SIR,—From time to time your JOURNAL illustrates varying forms of dwellings built for 'private occupation and for renting by local authorities. So far as my recollection serves me, it is your custom to indicate the cost of construction of the former but never with rents to tenants of the latter.

It will not, I believe, be argued that such information does not concern the architect, for architects naturally must have in mind the ultimate cost to the "consumer." Especially in times of ever increasing cost-of-living is rent of particular importance.

At least one individual reader would be very appreciative to learn the prospective gross rents (showing subsidy) that are being charged for the attractive amenities so often illustrated in your features.

As being more concerned with management than with design, I offer this suggestion for your consideration.

R. P. SLOCOMBE

London.

[Would readers appreciate this information? If so, we shall try to obtain it when possible.—ED.]

#### Architecture as Art

STR,-The little argument over the professional practice exam. seems to have spread to much more fundamental issues. Maybe the larger question was in discussed "Quo Vadis AA?" they concluded that "Something must be done," though, if anyone knew what, he kept quiet about it.
It is imperative, if we are to work out what is happening to architects, to dis-tinguish between long- and short-term problems. Finding work is a short-term tinguish problem, knowing what to do with it when you find it is a problem that is always with One point which seems to be consistently missed in present day debates is that architecture is an Art—and a Fine Art A lot of words are wasted in trying to get around this fact, and many ingenious theories have been produced to show that architecture is not really as difficult as that, and that as long as you get a good plan, or a 58 deg. 17 ft. set square, or a decent of window details, or a space frame, all will be well. The attempted evasions are varied and subtle (they will probably provide a good subject for a tranquil essay by whoin John Summerson's place a hundred years hence), but it is enough to point out here that architecture is not planning, not engineering, not science, not commonsense, neither landscape nor townscape, not even design, but a different thing altogether, in fact, an Art.

Now Art is in a pretty obscure state these days. It hardly seems to be taught in schools of architecture at all, perhaps because of technical difficulties, and its place is taken, in a makeshift way, by taste. Plunging rashly into another generalisation, I would say that while Art consists of having good ideas, taste consists of knowing good ideas, so that a student's career becomes a mad race to the reference library.

Likewise outside the schools. Men with an

Likewise outside the schools. Men with an artistic training have managed to get themselves into important positions in industry by the argument that good design improves production and stimulates sales. The reasons put forward for the employment of architects are much the sarhe. Well and good, after all we must live somehow, but this argument only implies the need for a good measure of sense and a slick line in the latest shapes. As this is all that the designer is paid to turn out, all too often it is all that he does turn out, whether he is designing houses or washing machines.

The schools exist to fill the profession, and if the profession calls for tasteful technicians, these will the schools produce. No wonder that a young man who enters a school as an intending artist feels confused when he comes out at the top end. Just at present the schools are producing more than the profession can absorb, which makes life very awkward for a lot of us, so we object, loudly. Hard times have a habit of getting easier, though. What, I submit, is more seriously wrong with our shiny new profession is that not only are we not bothering to train artists, but we are not even concerned at the lack of them.

P. G. BERESFORD.

London.

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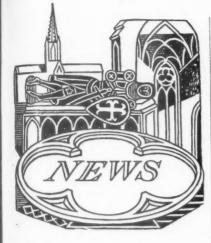
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#### MOHLG

#### Housing Progress

The number of permanent houses completed in Great Britain during February was 16,163; 471 more than in January, and 2,179 more

than in February, 1951.

The total number of houses completed from the end of the war to February 29, 1952, was 1,205,350 (including 157,146) temporary homes).

#### Non-traditional Houses

The Minister of Housing and Local Government, in a circular to local authorities (28/52), has urged that programmes of traditional houses be "supplemented by the use of established 'non-traditional' methods."

These methods, the circular states, "provide thoroughly satisfactory houses at prices fully competitive with traditional methods,

fully competitive with traditional methods, and, given judicious and careful lay-out, of not less satisfactory appeagance."

The Minister has asked the firms mainly concerned what increase in production they can make, and, in order to save time in the placing of contracts, he will agree with the firm's prices for each type of house in each region, although variations will be permitted where site, or other, conditions are site, or other, conditions are where

where site, or other, conditions are exceptional.

Increased housing programmes will be offered to local authorities who employ new methods of building for some of the houses they intended to build by traditional methods, and they will be permitted also to be a compared of their private enterprise licences. issue some of their private enterprise licences for the building of non-traditional houses. (See ASTRAGAL'S comments on page 441.)

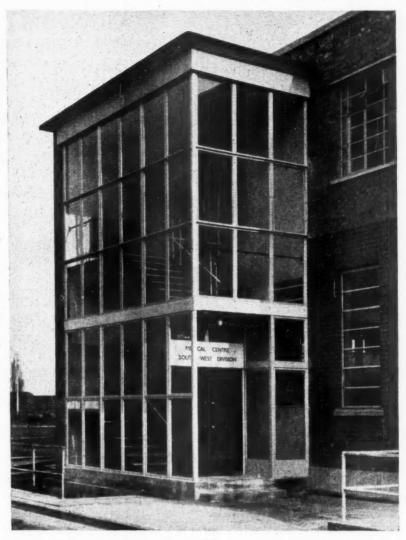
#### Services and Equipment

The Minister of Housing and Local Government has followed up his suggestions for economizing in the design of houses by asking local authorities to consider saving materials and labour, and keeping rents down, by reviewing the equipment of their

In Circular 37/51, Mr. Macmillan points out that a saving of £50 in the capital cost of a house is equivalent to a reduction of over 10d. a week in the rent and he suggests that many prospective tenants might prefer

that many prospective tenants might prefer to do without some services and items of equipment if rents were thereby reduced.

The Minister urges authorities to take account of the requirement of people to whom their houses will be let. These vary considerably, and authorities might install better services and equipment in different grouns of houses (at appropriately varying rents). rents).



A new medical centre for London Transport workers was opened recently by the deputy chairman of the Executive, John Cliff. The centre occupies part of a floor which has been constructed over the Chiswick recruiting and training building (the entrance staircase is shown above). Accommodation includes: reception room, consulting rooms, X-ray room, laboratory, eyesight testing room, records room and office. Consulting architects: Wallis Gilbert & Partners (in association with the Executive's Architect, Thomas Bilbow). Contractors: Marshall Andrews & Co. Ltd.

#### DIARY

Design and the Public. The Influence of the South Bank and Battersea. Misha Black. At 88, Regent Street, W.1. (Sponsor: Institute of Public Relations.) 6.30 p.m. APRIL 17

Sculpture in Gardens. Reg Butler. At the Housing Centre, 13, Suffolk Street, S.W.I. (Sponsor: ILA.) 6 p.m. APRIL 17

British Standards and the Architect. Joint lecture by E. D. Mills, P. Cutbush and G. Weston. At RIBA, 66, Portland Place, London, W.I. 6 p.m. APRIL 22

Survey and Plan for Woolwich Town Centre. Discussion led by Arthur Ling. At 13, Suffolk Street, S.W.1. (Sponsor: HC.) 6 p.m. APRIL 22

RSI Health Congress. At Margate. The Organization and Design of Hospital Out-Patient Departments, Brigadier J. Bigby Welch; Physical Planning and the Housing Drive, J. W. R. Adams; The Discharge of Trade Effluents into Sewers, W. H. Lockett; Some Aspects of Housing, with particular reference to Rural Areas, A. A. Armes; and other papers.

APRIL 22-25

A Review of Current Research in Heating and Ventilating. A lecture by N, S. Billington. At Engineering Centre, 351, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow. (Sponsor: IHVE, Scottish Branch.) 6.30 p.m. APRIL 29

Exhibition of Italian Contemporary Architecture. At 66, Portland Place, W.I. (Sponsor RIBA.) Closed from April 11 to 15 inclusive. Mondays to Fridays: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturdays: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. UNTIL APRIL 30

Amenities in Factory Design. A lecture by Walter R. Bennett. At RSA, John Adam Street, Adelphi, London, W.C.2. 2.30 p.m.
APRIL 30

IES Summer Meeting. At Winter Garden Pavilion, Eastbourne. Those wishing to attend should write to: The Secretary, IES, 32, Victoria Street, London, S.W.I, before April 18. May 20-23 PREFABRICATED



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Plan of typical 6-classroom school [Scale:  $\frac{I}{4\pi}$ " = 1'0"]

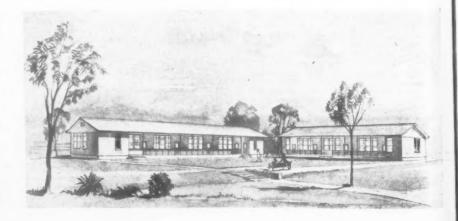
Up to November, 1951, approximately 1½ million pounds worth of prefabricated buildings for schools, offices, hospitals, bungalows, etc., had been delivered to various parts of Australia by Hawkesley Constructions of Gloucester. Above is a photograph of a typical general purpose building, 150 ft. long, 11 ft. high to the eaves and with a span of 40 ft. Below, right, is a sketch of three and four classroom blocks for the Department of Education, New South Wales. All the buildings are in panel form with the internal details prefabricated in the factory, so that on delivery to the site the final assembly occupies only a short period. The panels vary in size according to whether an 8-ft., 9-ft., 11-ft. or 12-ft. 6-in. ceiling height is required to suit the functional requirements of the building. All com-

handled by a gang of about 6 men. The external wall panels each comprise a framework of light alloy extension, braced with horizontal timber beams and faced externally with ribbed light alloy sheets and, on the internal face, either with hardboard or plaster board. The cavity thus formed is lightly packed with a glass wool blanket which forms an insulating medium which has proved

ponents are designed to be readily

adequate for temperate and tropical climates. Internal walls have a timber frame and are faced on both sides with hardboard or plaster board. The roof panels are of light alloy which is faced, during the rolling process, with a thin

film of pure aluminium having a high resistance to corrosion and providing a polished surface. The reflective properties are valuable for insulation purposes. These panels are supported on light alloy trusses which are sub-assembled in the factory in sections suitable for convenient packing and easy final assembly. All the necessary fittings for the complete electrical and plumbing installations are built into the panels as far as possible,



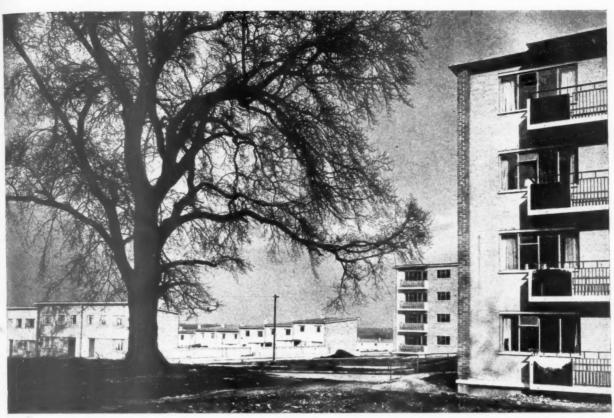
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Housing by Fry, Drew and Partners at Harlow New Town.

#### HOUSING LAYOUT IN LONDON'S NEW TOWNS

Readers will remember that about eighteen months ago D. Rigby Childs gave a series of reports on the organization and planning of the new towns and on progress made to the summer of 1950. This week he comments on the development of six of them. This survey is illustrated with aerial photographs which are exclusive to the JOURNAL.

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### PROGRESS REPORT By D. Rigby Childs

SINCE my last surveys were published many of the new town corporations have been able to get into their stride. Much of the fundamental planning has now been completed, and the time has arrived when attention can be turned to looking at the end product of all this planning—the appearance and the quality of life in the embryonic new towns.

There are many criteria by which the success of the new towns can be judged. It almost goes without saying

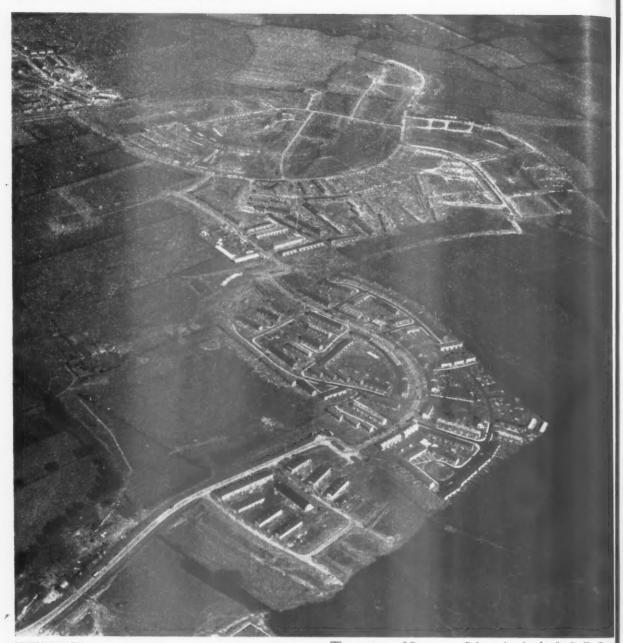
that the towns must be efficient as places to live and work in, to go to school in, to bring up a family in, and to enjoy the years of old age in. The new towns must also pay their way and fulfil their original function, be it to absorb people from the metropolis or to serve as a base for new industry or for coal mining. By these criteria it should in due time be relatively easy to appraise the merits of the individual new towns; it may be less easy to consider their merits in terms of the quality of the new environment which has been created.

A new series of aerial photographs, taken only about three weeks ago, show the progress made to date at six of the new towns in the London Region. A selection from this series is shown on this and the following pages.

The six new towns illustrated in this survey are Stevenage, Hemel Hempstead, Crawley, Harlow, Hatfield and Welwyn. I cannot do better than to open the survey by showing a photograph of progress at the first new town to be designated by the former Minister of Town and Country Planning, the now Lord Silkin.

Northgate housing site, Crawley New Town. Four-bedroom terrace houses by A. G. Sheppard Fidler.





#### **STEVENAGE**

By the end of February this year the corporation had been able to complete only 317 houses and 44 flats and had housed a population of a few short of a thousand—progress during the last nine months had advanced rapidly, especially in the development of the second building area at Bedwell, the scene of the aerial view above.

the scene of the aerial view above.

In the completed town, Bedwell neighbourhood will be immediately to the east of the new town centre. In the foreground of the photograph is Monk's Wood and the more scrub-like Whormley Wood. These woods will form part of the green wedge separating the inner from the outer parts of the new town. Eventually another neighbourhood—Shephall—will be to the right of the woods and adjoining

The new town of Stevenage. Below: housing by O. C. F. Caro.

fields. Beyond the woods will be sites for a group of secondary schools. This view shows the skeleton of the

neighbourhood's roads being formed At the end of Whormley Wood can just be discerned the preliminary road clea terr tect

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excavation for an inter-neighbourhood road. The photograph brings out very clearly the variations on the theme of terracing of houses which the architects are working out.

On the left of the picture is the fringe of the Stoney Hall development, the site close to Old Stevenage where building first began and where the housing is dominated by the well-known seven-storey block of 110 flats by Yorke, Rosenberg and Mardall.

At the time of writing the work under construction is as follows:—Bedwell Neighbourhood: 1,282 dwellings, a public house and 6 shops and maisonettes. Elsewhere: a hostel for 350 men, the above-mentioned block of flats, 147 houses, 6 shops and maisonettes in Stoney Hall, 10 other dwellings. A standard factory of 22,500 square feet was due to start in March (Chief architect: Clifford Holliday).

#### HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

And now to move from Stevenage, on the east side of Hertfordshire, to the opposite side of the same county, where Hemel Hempstead was selected as the site for the second of the London new towns to be designated. At Hemel Hempstead the corporation holds the pride of place. It has every hope of being the first to complete 1,000 houses in a new town.

About 3,000 people are living in Adeyfield neighbourhood, designed by



The first 14 shops at Adeyfield neighbourhood centre. Below: the principal part of the centre's new housing estate is outside the picture to the left. Old Hemel Hempstead is in the background.

the corporation's architect H. K. Ablett. Road layout work at the second neighbourhood has begun at Bennett's End, where Booth and Ledeboer have designed the layout for one of the most interesting sites among any of the London new towns.

The corporation's building record is 932 houses completed and 761 under construction; 3 factories are in production, 3 more are finished, and 4 are being built, 3 of which should be finished by the autumn. As at Stevenage and elsewhere, the school building programme by the county council has also gone ahead.

The neighbourhood centre at Adey-

field is planned to comprise 25 shops, a branch post office, a church, public house, and a hall, grouped around a square which is to be specially treated with coloured paving. The corporation has succeeded in obtaining approval to construct all the buildings around the square.

The block of 14 shops which can be seen in the photograph were occupied last August, and another 7 under construction can be seen in the foreground. The public house has also been started. It is hoped to lay the foundation stone of the church later this year and to start the hall in the autumn (Chief architect: H. K. Ablett).



F. Carry.

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#### CRAWLEY

In a speech given at Crawley at the end of last month the chairman of the corporation, Sir Thomas Bennett, described how detail plans have been prepared for six out of the nine neighbourhood units of the complete plan for Crawley. Development plans in full detail have been prepared and issued to contractors for four neighbourhoods.

The aerial photograph shows the three neighbourhoods where building is going on. In the foreground is West Green. Beyond the triangle formed by the remaining open fields, which are to be kept permanently free from building, is Northgate. On the left of Northgate is the industrial estate where 15 factories are now in production in a series of standard factories and in two special purpose factories. Further building is in progress. The estimated value of factories built, under construction, or to be built by industrialists themselves, will amount to £1,600,000.

Across the front of the industrial estate and Northgate neighbourhood

can be seen, in the middle distance of the photograph, the old London to Brighton Road, which passes through old Crawley to the right of West Green.
Behind Northgate neighbourhood stretches Three Bridges neighbourhood, incorporating part of the existing community of that name.

The new town has been developed from the old centre outwards, and all planning, which has hitherto been carried out in detail, has had to fit the existing sporadic development. small West Green neighbourhood has been no exception to the rule. foreground of photograph.]

The chairman, in making his report, said that the roads and services of West Green were virtually complete, except for final footpaths and landseaping, and that 622 dwellings were built, or in the course of building. Of these, 96 were 3-storey flats and 50 were 2-storey flats.

The neighbourhood centre [the site for which can be seen in the photograph immediately beyond the first group of new houses] will consist of 7 shops with living accommodation over, together with a certain number of houses, flats and bungalows, is expected to be in existence by the end of this year. The first part of the primary school [the site can be seen in the middle of the neighbourhood] should be ready by Sep-

The West Green neighbourhood—soon to be completed—will be an amalgam of development by the Corporation, extensive housing by Horsham Council and the older part of West Green.

The chairman described "Great efforts have been made to see that diversity is obtained, and that as much interest in individual houses can be obtained as is possible. have avoided the erection of houses in rows on the suburban pattern, and we hope that West Green, as it is emerging, will be regarded by both old and new residents as worthy of its position in a Sussex town."

By the end of March the number of houses and flats completed in Crawley was 730; about 2,000 people had been housed. By December, it is hoped that about 1,450 dwellings will be occupied. (Chief architect: A. G. Sheppard Fidler)



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Harlow New Town.

#### HARLOW

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Harlow comes next in the order of chronology. It is to be the largest of the new towns, with a population of 80,000. The other distinctive feature about Harlow is that the development, with the exception of the addition of 120 houses to old Harlow, is taking place on virgin soil. For the planner this may not always be an advantage, but for the designer it certainly is.

The latest position at Harlow—again this is up to the end of March—is that 770 dwellings have been completed, a further 1,182 dwellings are past foundation level, and 152 have not yet reached that stage. The separation of these last two classes may not always sound as well as a single figure for all dwellings under construction, but it is a

method of presenting information which the other corporations might well follow.

The aerial view I have chosen of Harlow is one that brings out the form of part of the Mark Hall north neighbourhood rather well. Just visible in the foreground of the photograph stands the row of detached houses which forms the boundary the house group called Mark Hall Moore, beyond which is the town, the group containing the now familiar point-block of flats.

Also in the foreground are the Gowers (on the left), where 16 small houses and a new vicarage are being built, and Ward Hatch [on the right] where a primary school is taking shape.

The housing and flats groups which can be seen are the Chantrey [front

left], Tany's Dell [front right] and Glebelands [right back]. The site still largely unfinished is known as Area 4, Mark Hall. It is hoped to build there 76 houses and two blocks which have been designed by H. C. H. Monson. The basis of the scheme is a tall block as a distant point of attraction and a low block of irregular form, giving an interesting shape and closer viewpoints. Immediately to the south [extreme

Immediately to the south [extreme left, photo] is the Stow, the neighbourhood centre for Mark Hall/Nettleswell neighbourhood, 28 shops are nearing completion; the second stage of shop building at the Stow is expected to begin late this year.

Beyond the Stow will be the Nettles-

Beyond the Stow will be the Nettleswell section, whereas the land at the further end of Glebelands and Area 4 will not be built over. To the east of



Above: the site of Hatfield New Town. In the background of the picture is Welwyn Garden City (seen also on the next page.) A permanent green belt will separate these two towns.

this part of Mark Hall north lies the East industrial area.

Industrial planning at Harlow at first lagged behind the provision of houses, but this is now being made good for 227,500 square feet of floor area is in course of development, compared to 89,900 sq. ft. already occupied.

89,900 sq. ft. already occupied.
(Architect-planner, Frederick Gibberd; executive architect, Victor Hammett.)

#### HATFIELD

What a contrast there is between the sites of Harlow and Hatfield. About 1,200 yards to the north of Hatfield is Welwyn Garden City, which can be seen in the background of the aerial photograph at the top of this page. A permanent green belt will fortunately maintain this separation. To the west

Houses at Hatfield New Town, Architects: Lionel Brett and K. Boyd. of Hatfield and to the right of the Great North Road is Hatfield Aerodrome [extreme right photograph], and to the east is Hatfield House and park. Well over half of the designated area can be seen in this photograph, which so vividly shows up the unplanned creation of the last fifty years. Fortun-



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ately for the designers of new Hatfield the southern half of the site is practically free from existing buildings.

The initial development, logically enough, has begun at the point where the old left off. The whole of the building activity has been concentrated in the new Roe Green neighbourhood: 74 houses have been completed up to date: 307 houses and 195 flats are under way or soon will be.

Eight workshops with a combined floor area of 1,750 square feet have been finished. The next stage of building will be the inviting of tenders for a neighbourhood centre, including shops, meeting hall and flats and for a further

492 dwellings.

That is the beginning in Hatfield, where 9,000 people are already living and where plans for another 16,000 are being made.

(Chief architect: Lionel Brett.)

#### WELWYN GARDEN CITY

It is, perhaps, appropriate to conclude with a view of the pioneer new town which has been entirely a creation of the last thirty years and has been planned from the start.

The aerial photograph of Welwyn is a close-up of part of the view of the Garden City which appears in the background of the photograph of Hatfield. It shows the south-west area of Welwyn, the parkway, the town centre and the industrial area (on the right). In the foreground is Lemsford Lane and the fringe of development which borders the green belt separating Welwyn and Hat-

This view of the first Garden City shows Welwyn largely as it was when it was still in the hands of the former Garden City Company. The new additions in this area will not be substan-

tial. The opening phases of a building programme can be seen at the near end of the parkway, but this is no more than a rounding-off development. The football pitches on the adjoining field will be re-sited; the field, however, will remain for games.

The figures for the Welwyn Garden City Corporation's building programme are as follows: -62 houses, 98 flats, 2 shops, and 1 extension have been finished; 522 houses and 101 flats are

under way or soon will be.

Also completed: 4 factories, with a total floor area of 21,000 sq. ft.; the Homestead Court Hotel and Restaurant, and a block of offices. About 300 people have been housed in Welwyn by the Corporation, but this figure should soon rise as almost 600 men are at work on civil engineering and building contracts. Chief architect: Louis de Soissons.)

Welwyn Garden City.



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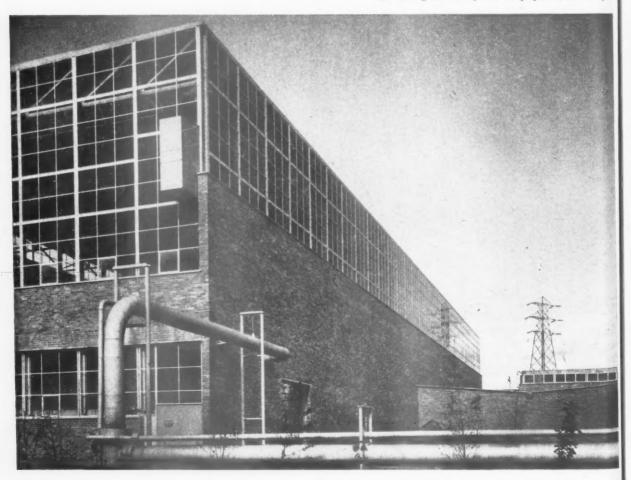
ed area , which olanned Fortun-

#### PAPER MILLS

at LLANGYNWYD, BRIDGEND, GLAMORGAN designed by HENRY BUDGEN AND CO.

The site of the new paper mills for Wiggins, Teape & Co. (1919), Ltd., near Bridgend, had to be located in a government-scheduled distressed area, to have sufficient supply of water for papermaking, and to be sufficiently large to allow for the economic extension of the mill in any direction. It had to have a sufficient gradient to provide the necessary area of semi-basement with the minimum of excavation.

View looking north-west, with the pulp store on the left.



OFFICE CHAIRS: BANK IN LONDON E.C.3

Westwood, Sons and Harrison, architects; James A. Crabtree, assistant architect-in-charge.



The chairs are in mahogany and have backs and seats upholstered in foamed rubber covered with hide.

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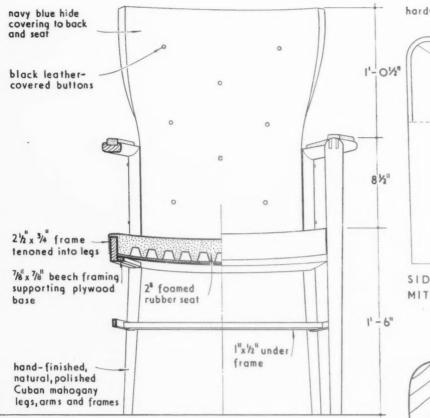
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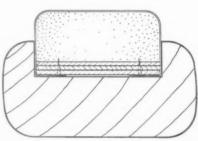
OFFICE CHAIRS: BANK IN LONDON E.C.3

Westwood, Sons and Harrison, architects; James A. Crabtree, assistant architect-in-charge.



hardwood tongues

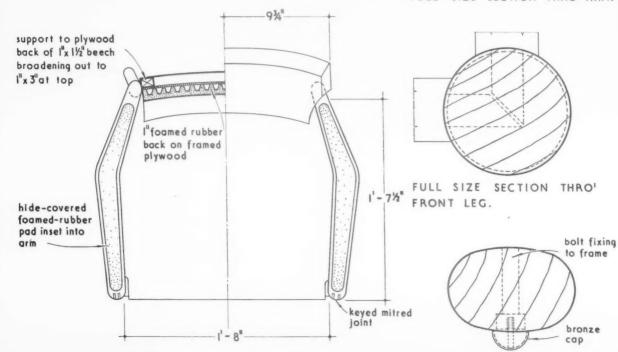
SIDE ELEVATION OF KEYED MITRED JOINT. scale full size



PART SECTION AND FRONT ELEVATION OF CHAIR.

scale 11/2" = 11-0"

FULL SIZE SECTION THRO' ARM.



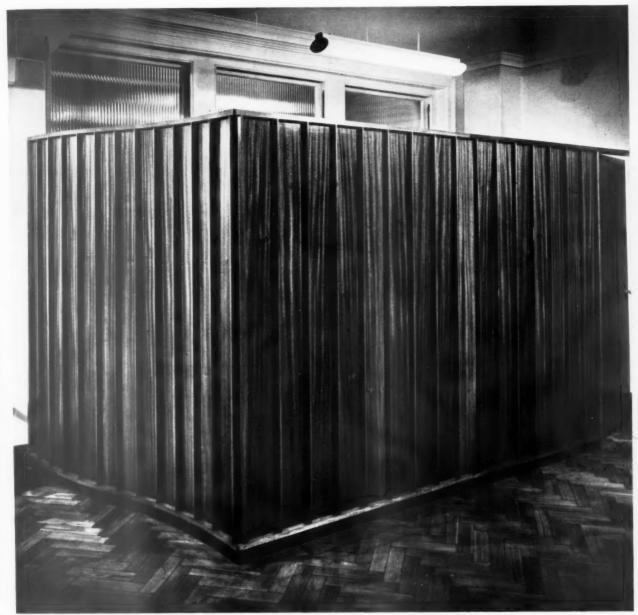
PART SECTION AND PLAN OF CHAIR, scale 1/2 = 1-0

FULL SIZE SECTION THRO! BACK LEG.

#### WORKING DETAILS

WAITING ROOM SCREEN: BANK IN LONDON E.C.3

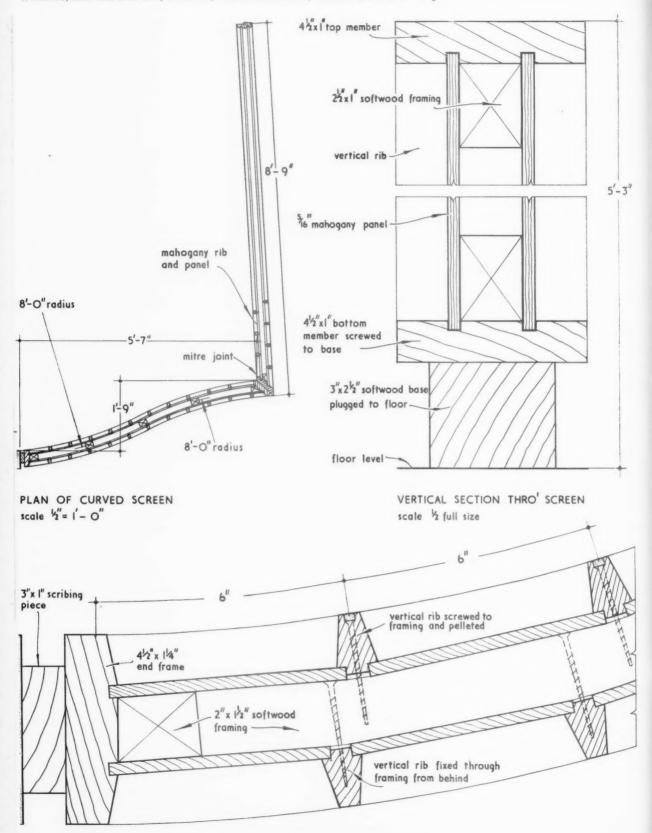
Westwood, Sons and Harrison, architects; James A. Crabtree, assistant architect-in-charge.



The narrow mahogany panels are separated by prominent vertical ribs' and follow the double curve at the end of the screen.

WAITING ROOM SCREEN: BANK IN LONDON E.C.3

Westwood, Sons and Harrison, architects; James A. Crabtree, assistant architect-in-charge.







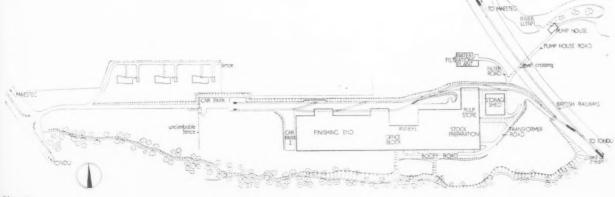
Above, a night view of the mill looking north-east.

SITE.—The close proximity of the Llynfi Power Station assures a supply of piped steam adequate for the necessary processes, thus eliminating the need for a large boiler plant. It also provides a convenient source of electric power for machinery. The site is situated between rail and road, which allows a natural production flow.

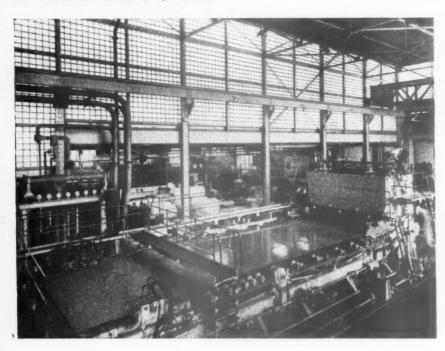
PLAN.—The planning is governed by the necessity for efficient production flow lines. The raw material enters the site from the railway and passes through all processes at ground floor level and emerges as the finished product for despatch by road or rail without interruption and avoiding unnecessary handling. Routine machinery maintenance is confined to the semi-basement below the production area, ensuring the minimum interference with production. The administrative offices are sited centrally in the mill between the production area and the despatch and finishing areas. These offices, canteen, laboratory, etc., are planned on the first

to third floors to allow a free production flow at ground floor level between machinery house and finishing area. Important offices, such as the managers', directly overlook the production area. A portion of the third floor is occupied by a 60,000-gallon water tank. The water is pumped from the River Llynfi via the filtration plant to this tank, and then gravity-fed to machines for paper-making. After passing through the process, the water is cleaned, collected in a 5-ft. duct running below the mill and returned to the river below the pumphouse.

CONSTRUCTION.—The whole of the mill is steel framed, based on an 8-ft. 3-in. transverse grid above ground floor level. The walls are mostly of 11-in. brickwork below sill level. Roofs throughout are of aluminium decking, centrally drained to avoid eaves gutters and simplify drain runs. This inverted roof construction also gives improved light distribution and reduces the cubic content of the building for space heating and forced ventilation. The high



Site plan





Left, the machine house looking north into baby machine area. Above, looking south from the stock preparation area. Below, finishing end of the mill.

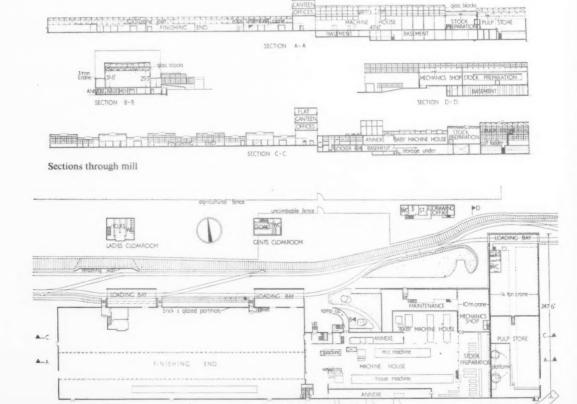


#### PAPER MILLS

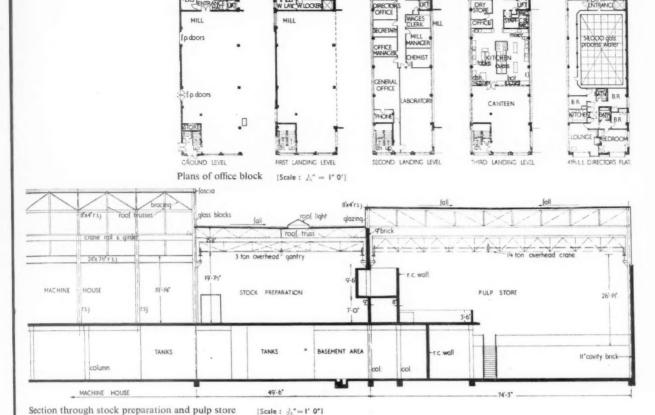
at LLANGYNWYD, BRIDGEND, GLAMORGAN

designed by HENRY BUDGEN and co. and low roof bay construction to the finishing area on concrete piles because of the low load-bearing was designed to give maximum day lighting over the whole floor area by the use of vertical glazing and lantern lights. The basement area, administrative block, pulp store and finishing end areas are built

capacity of the ground. The basement area is constructed of reinforced concrete and includes various large tanks of special design. There is a suspended floor to the production area above. The



Ground floor plan [Scale:  $\frac{1}{12}$ ," = 1' 0"]

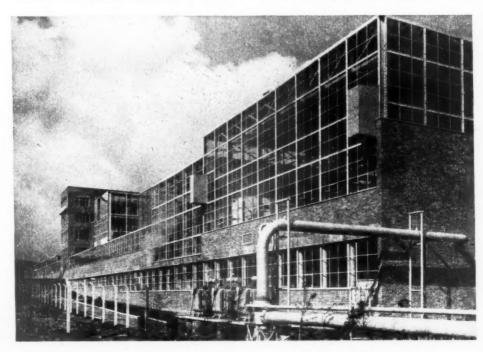


RC work is of a complex nature due to the great weight of machinery over.

FINISHES.—The windows are steel-framed and are clipped direct to the steel stanchions, thus providing the maximum daylight. Owing to the high humidity resulting from the process in the pro-

duction area, maximum insulation was important to avoid excessive condensation and to achieve this and also maintain a high day lighting standard, glass bricks are used in 8-ft. 3-in. by 16-ft. 6-in. panels. The general contractors were G. Percy Trentham,

The general contractors were G. Percy Trentham,
Ltd. For sub-contractors, see page 470.



Right, south facade of the production area, with the tall office block on the left.

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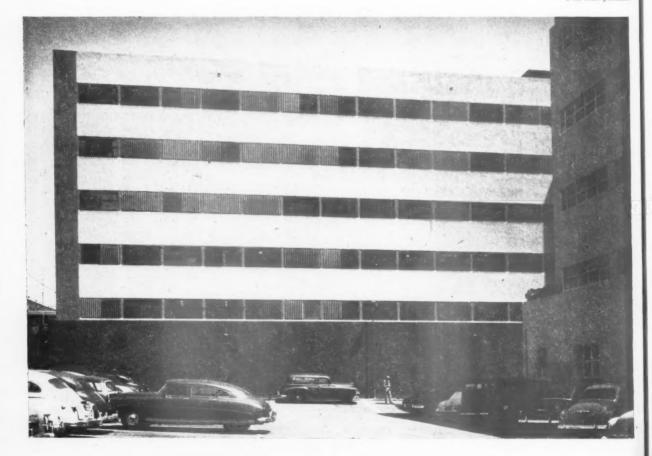
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#### MEDICAL BUILDING

in LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, USA designed by VICTOR GRUEN associate-in-charge R. M. BAUMFELD consulting engineer EDGARDO CONTINI

The Mid-Wilshire Medical Building, recently completed in Los Angeles, is a kind of "Harley Street" under one roof, providing suites for medical specialists and several dentists. The suites are 35 ft. deep and vary in size from 300 sq. ft. to 1,350 sq. ft. In most cases they have a waiting room, business office, one or two small treatment rooms and consulting rooms. Nearly half have X-ray facilities.

The west facade.



The facing street wall cast 2-in. direct grid



The south facade facing the main street. The solid wall areas are of precast concrete panels 2-in. thick, applied directly to a light grid steel frame.

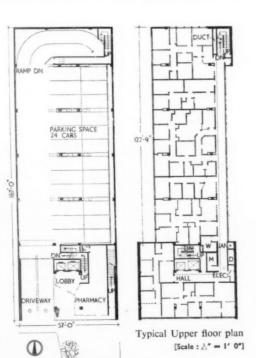
deep iness ies.

PARKING SPACE 32 CARS

STORE

ELECTRIC, EL PIT

Basement plan



Ground floor plan

PLAN.-The architect was given the problem of designing an office building of a specialized type for sixty tenants and with adequate parking facilities, which are provided entirely within the building in the basement and a large part of the ground floor. These floors are connected by a ramp and cars are driven into the building so that sick and handicapped people have to walk only a few steps to the lifts. Because of the narrow width of the site, which is 57 ft. by 167 ft., a single corridor was designed on the east side of each floor in order to allow the maximum of rentable space (75 per cent. of the total area of each upper floor). Corridors are lit by a strip window and on the inside wall are translucent glass panels, vertically divided, to provide daylight for the reception rooms of the individual suites. It was possible to design most of the suites to individual requirements, since 80 per cent. of the total rental space was let prior to the drawings being prepared. To allow flexibility in the arrangement of consulting rooms, a 4-ft. module was used for strip windows.



#### MEDICAL BUILDING

at LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA designed by VICTOR GRUEN

CONSTRUCTION.—Normally, on the west coast of the USA, steel framing is more expensive than RC construction for a building of this height, but in this case the use of structural steel was justified by eliminating heavy exterior walls, designing the main wing on the rigid frame principle with double cantilevers (columns are set back 8 ft. 5 in. from the exterior face) and using a very light type of floor construction. In spite of fairly wide column spacing, 25 ft. by 23 ft. 6 in. in the main wing, steel for the average floor framing, including girders, beams, joists and columns, weighs less than  $9\frac{1}{2}$  lb. per sq. ft.

Welding was used for all rigid connections and riveting elsewhere. It is thought that the structural system represents a 25 per cent. saving in tonnage over more conventional steel framing. Floors consist of a metal deck with 2-in. lightweight concrete topping supported on small open-web joists. The external walls are of 2-in. precast concrete panels.

FINISHES.—Ceilings are of metal lathing and a single thickness of vermiculite plaster, which is classed as "A" fire rating by the latest US building code revision. The ground floor entrance and lobby have walls of glass in aluminium frames. The building is air-conditioned throughout. The cost was kept below \$12 per sq. ft.

Above, main entrance with drive-in to parking area on the left and pharmacy on the right. Below, progress photograph showing light floor beams. Below right, an upper floor corridor on the east side of the building.





### TECHNICAL SECTION

It is to be expected that, with the complicated monetary policy which is presented in this year's budget, the effects of the Chancellor's proposals are not yet fully realized. Where the building industry is concerned, the changes brought about by the budget may be already appreciated but, as this week's special article indicates, they will not be felt for several months, perhaps even a year. Chief amongst these changes is the rise in the bank The effect of this on the private would-be house owner is likely to be most marked and will lessen the present demand for houses. The cut of 4 per cent. in civil investments will, in the same way, mean less work for the industry. Today, defence work represents the only reliable demand. As far as the future situation can be estimated, it appears that there may be a gradual fall in prices and increased competition.

R. FITZMAURICE

This week's special article

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1 SOCIOLOGY economic affairs

The number preceding the week's special article or survey indicates the appropriate subject heading of the Information Centre to which the article or survey belongs. The complete list of these headings is printed from time-to-time. To each survey is appended a list of recently-published and relevant Information Centre items. Further and earlier information can be found by referring to the index published free each year.

In the following article Professor Ian Bowen discusses the budget, and describes its most important effects on the building industry. He finds that there is little likelihood of a substantial increase in the housing programme, but suggests that we may expect a fall in building costs.

The most significant points in the budget debate for the building industry were the announcement of a higher bank rate, and of a cut of £100 m. in the total amount of civil investment. With regard to the latter, Mr. Butler referred particularly to reductions in expenditure on capital and machinery, and in stocks held by industrialists, and referred to a possible offsetting increase in defence expenditures and in building. The question whether building is intended to be cut or not remains, therefore, somewhat an open one, but it would appear

to be the Government's intention to keep the size of the programme approximately constant, making up in housing for any reduction in educational or commercial building.

It still remains important that the broader policy is to cut civil investment as a whole by at least £100 m.; that is by about 4 per cent., with a prospect of further cuts if the gold and dollar reserves do not improve. The further rise of the bank rate indicates, moreover, that the Chancellor is intending to rely more heavily than ever on the monetary

weapon; in other words, on a tightening of credit throughout the economic system. This is confirmed by the tax changes which he introduced. Had he meant to use fiscal rather than monetary controls the income tax concessions could hardly have been made.

How is this extra twist of the credit screw going to affect building? That is perhaps one of the most difficult fore-

casts to make.

#### EFFECT OF LOAN RATES

The most obvious consequence of a higher bank rate is that other money rates also are moved upwards, though not necessarily in proportion. Some sign of this is already apparent in the increased mortgage rates announced by the building societies. A similar, or steeper, hardening of rates will no doubt be found by the would-be borrower who wishes to finance his house purchase, for example, by way of increased overdraft (the actual level varying a little from bank to bank, and depending in part upon the financial status of the borrower). Yet this difference, a rise of 1 per cent. or even 1 per cent., would not seem to be prohibitive. On the face of it, such an amount would not seem likely to choke off the great excess of demand for housing which we have become accustomed to regard as almost normal.

Yet even this apparently small change may be quite significant. This is because the cost of home ownership does not consist of initial building costs alone, and also because building costs are still so high. After all, the rise in interest rates may add from 4s. to 8s. a week to the outgoings on a medium-sized house. This increase may not be unbearable to many would-be owners, but may, on the other hand, be the last straw to the marginal purchasers. They already have to reckon with income tax on the house, rising municipal rates, solicitor's fees and the other heavy incidentals of house purchase.

A hidden item in any such calculation is the cost of housing itself. It is unfortunately still true that little definite information is available on the present-day final costs even of the houses which are being subsidized by the State. It is safe to predict that when final costs are available they will be a shock to

the public.

The small rise in interest rates will affect other types of building too. Every business in the country which has building plans will be forced to reconsider whether or not they can be postponed.

The momentum of the existing excess demand will no doubt carry the industry along, fully employed at its present level, for another six months or longer, but it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that by this time next year there will be a noticeable reduction in

all new building activity, apart from that directly connected with defence.

#### EFFECT ON CAPITAL VALUES

In a free market economy changes in the long-term rate of interest (for example, the yield of an investment in consols, at current prices) have their most immediate impact on the value of durable goods or property. If consols fall property value falls in sympathy. In our own closely regulated economy, with uncertainty as to the future course of prices still an important factor, the consequences of a change in interest rates may not be so obvious or striking. Some fall in property values is, however, almost certain to take place. One of the major effects of the rise in interest rates is likely to prick the bubble of real property values, with their constant tendency to rise.

Thus, some houses, the older ones to start with, and the newer ones later, will begin coming on the market at much more reasonable figures. The buyer, and not the seller, will now be in the stronger position. But if a buyer can hope for a house already in existence at a fair price, he is so much the less likely to build at an exorbitant one. The builder will find himself in a scissors of falling values and still rising

costs.

The same argument applies to certain other types of building, where existing premises happen to be available for adaptation to the desired use, but not, of course, in regions which are growing rapidly. Rising costs will put finished new buildings outside the expenditure that can be authorized or met, in view of falling property values.

#### CHANGING TYPES OF DEMAND

Some large sections of effective demand will indeed remain to be satisfied. Defence has already been mentioned, and there are many civilian needs, the money for them being available out of public or private funds. The capital in the hands of private persons, though not at all evenly distributed throughout the country, is still large, and as wealth tends to be concentrated in the south, a relative shift of demand from the north to the south is therefore quite likely.

But, in addition to the initial effects of rising rates on the ability or desire to borrow, and on capital values, there is the possibility of a downward spiral of prices developing. Once prices do fall buyers may hold off in the hopes of a further reduction. Even those with the necessary capital resources may thus be led to slow down or postpone their plans for investment.

Better quality of building may perhaps be encouraged. Building owners having become economically stronger and, in the light of their need to spend wisely if they spend at all, will perhaps insist upon higher standards of construction. This is also a possible

consequence of greater competitiveness developing for a dwindling volume of work.

#### HOUSING PROSPECTS

The discussion, so far, has necessarily been speculative and general; the important point is that there has been a bigger change in economic policy than is immediately obvious, and one which will have very marked results if it is consistently pursued. Housing policy, on the other hand, taken as a whole, can be changed only very slowly, and the policy-makers have to work within narrow limits; despite rather grandiose statements on the number of houses to be built, not much change is going to be noticeable for at least twelve months.

Last year nearly two hundred thousand houses were completed in Great Britain, but nearly twenty thousand more (i.e., 220,000 in all) were started. It would be surprising if many more than two hundred and thirty, or perhaps two hundred and forty, thousand houses could be completed in the current year. Nor are the circumstances at all propitious for raising this figure

very much in 1953.

The much sounder line of advance is now by way of the credit policy. There are many arguments to bring against the adoption of such a policy, but once this policy has been initiated the least that can be hoped is that it will be allowed to continue long enough to reduce building costs. For any impartial review of these costs over the last seven years will show that they have increased pari passu with the general inflation of prices, as indeed they did in the earlier post-war inflation of 1919-20. The first step towards adjusting the inflation has been taken. prices in general come down the building costs will fall too. Then will be the time to launch the building programmes that are now having to be postponed or abandoned.

The process of deflation is not, however, a pleasant one at any time, least of all when the country is politically divided and when the burden of rearmament is increasing. It may be that the policy is not persisted in to the point where costs all round are adjusted downwards; as far as building costs are concerned, enough would perhaps have been achieved if they could be stabilized for a period. Final costs would then bear a closer relationship to tender prices. Firm prices might even be quoted; and the industry could escape, at least in part, from the confusing economic troubles which have for so long hindered the best technical progress from being generally realized. But such a stabilization of costs will itself require a considerable measure of guidance from the Government as well as of planning within the industry.

IAN BOWEN

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#### AN ECONOMICAL OPEN FIRE

The Replacement Fire, illustrated on the right, has been developed by Hurseal, Ltd. It is based on a project worked out by the Domestic Appliances Section of the British Coal Utilization Research Association in 1947. At present the fire is in prototype form and is undergoing trials. It is claimed that the fire burns only to 1 lb. of coal per hour in a room of average size. When compared with conventional open fires this represents a saving of more than 60 per cent. The fire consists of an 18 gauge sheet steel panel, narrowing at the top. This fits into a normal open fireplace and encloses the existing grate. The back of the fireplace is filled in with asbestos sheet with a small flue hole near the top. A damper in the flue pipe controls the rate of burning. (Photograph, by courtesy of Picture Post.)



#### NEWS FROM THE USA

A new feature, which will appear from time to time, with reports of new products and new techniques from the American building industry.

Liquid vinyl plastic, used by the army and navy to form a protective skin over aeroplanes and equipment, is now being used in the USA to waterproof walls and roofs, to repair cracks, and to provide a non-slip floor finish. The material can be applied with a spray

gun and can be obtained in a variety of colours and textures.

A single skin, according to a report in Architectural Forum (USA, Jan., 1952, p. 133), "sprayed on plain brick walls" will "provide an economical and easily maintained surface." Applied in three skins, including a top layer of aluminium impregnated plastic, the material can be used as a roof covering. The cost of such a covering is stated to be 22 cent per sq. ft., while interior plastic wall coverings cost from 18 to 35 cent per sq. ft. The material can be sprayed quickly, dries quickly, and is highly resistant to the effects of thermal movement.

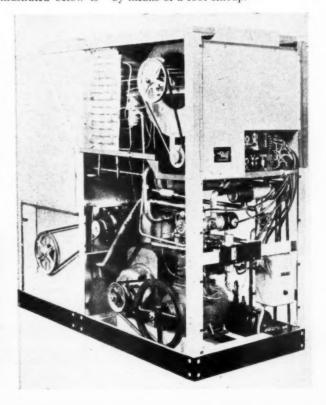
The combined heat pump and airconditioning plant illustrated below is being produced in the USA by the General Electric Co. of New Jersey. The plant is in one compact unit, the pump is driven by electricity and the action is reversible, so that warmed air can be provided in winter, and cooled air in summer.

An automatic nailing machine, also manufactured in the USA, can be hired by contractors there, complete with qualified operator. According to a report in *Progressive Architecture* (USA, Jan., 1952, p. 101) this machine drives a minimum of 100 nails per minute. On flooring (6 in. × 1 in. at 16-in. centres) 5,000 sq. ft. can be nailed per day. Operated by compressed air, the machine is guided by the operator by means of a foot stirrup.



Left, a workman guiding with his foot an American automatic nailing machine. Below, spraying liquid vinyl plastic as a roof covering. Right, the General Electric Co. of New Jersey's combined heat pump and airconditioning plant.





7.C.2



knowledge, no one man is able to excel in everything and in the field of human endeavour the final product is inevitably the result of co-operation by specialists. So it is with architectural planning. Working under the captaincy of the architect, the team of specialists all play their part and take responsibility for different sections of the project. Over the years, Lockhart, Equipment Ltd., have gained a reputation as specialists in the planning and equipping of Industrial Canteens, Hotels and Restaurants. Experienced technicians are at all time available to provide specialist service to the architects, which includes the preparation of layout plans and the submission of appropriate quotations, whether it be for a completely new installation or the reorganisation of existing facilities. Lockhart Equipment Ltd., offer a fully comprehensive service whereby every item of catering equipment from the largest refrigerator down to the smallest piece of crockery, cutlery, furniture, linen, etc., is planned for and supplied so that the whole unit can be handed over complete and ready for operation.

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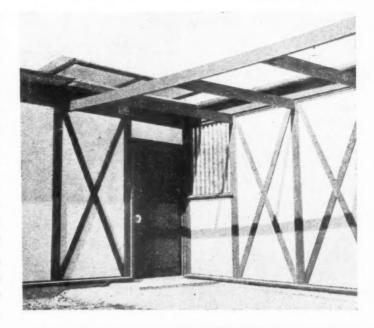
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HOUSE OF PLASTIC

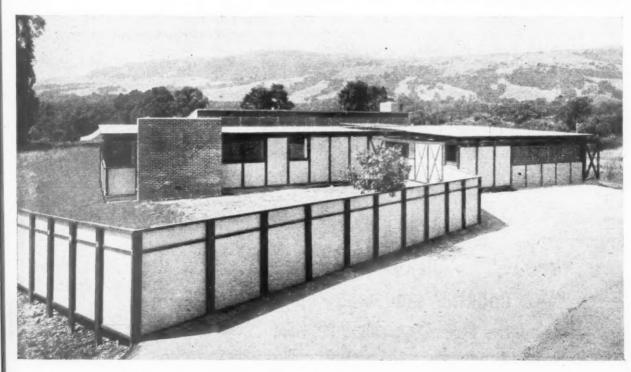
MATERIALS

IN CALIFORNIA

A house constructed almost entirely of reinforced laminated plastics, has been completed recently at Danville, California. The architect was Floyd Comstock. It is claimed that the plastics used are cheaper than conventional materials and are expected to last longer. The house is fireproof, and not liable to warp or be damaged by termites or mildew. The roof and the ceiling consist of the opposite sides of the same laminated sheet of asbestos fibre. The same is true of the outer and inner wall surfaces. In both cases the asbestos fibre panels are nailed to wooden studs with the butt-ends fused together by means of plasticized cement. The panels are two inches thick and are said to have adequate insulating properties. The house, which contains eleven rooms, has a concrete foundation which contains two plastic pipes carrying warm and cool air in tunnels running on the longitudinal axis. The material used for the pipes is compressed alsynite fibreglass. As it is translucent and can take a variety of colours, it is used elsewhere. In a maize colour, it forms a clerestory window, seen in the photograph below, and the window near the main entrance, top right, which also shows the wall construction. The photograph, on the right, shows the garage door where the material is used for its translucency and lightness.







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#### CALIFORNIAN PLASTIC HOUSE (continued)

On the right is the view from the living room, showing the indoor-dining room; the floor is covered with asphalt tile cemented to concrete. At the top is a part of the clerestory. The photograph below shows the entrance patio, also seen from the living room. Overhead is a "floating" roof in rose-coloured alsynite which transmits only the sun's infra-red, or warm rays. The roof can be raised or lowered. Beyond the patio, a porch canopy of aquamarine alsynite transmits only cool rays. The house cost 5.02 dollars per square foot.





Readers requiring up-to-date information on building products and services may complete and post this form to The Architects' Journal, 9, 11 and 13, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.1

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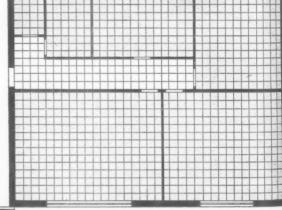
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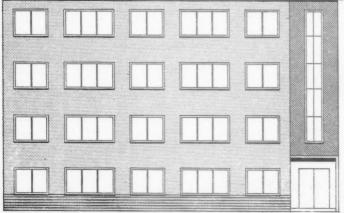
## ACCOTILE

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#### THE INDUSTRY

From the Industry this week Brian Grant reports on a new method of fixing laminated sheets, a plastic conduit, grills of cane, floor tiles in new colours, synthetic paint and a system for easy drawing.

#### FIXING PLASTIC SHEETING

An entirely new method of applying laminated plastic wall panelling has been used in the construction of a new BBC canteen at Bush House. The panelling has been carried out in \( \frac{1}{16} \)-in. "Formica" veneered grey linette for the flat surfaces and bird's-eye maple wood grain for curved doors. The main interest of the job is that the laminated plastic veneers have been bonded with a latex-rubber adhesive direct to cement-rendered walls with no cover fillets, supporting grounds or backing boards (affording considerable economy in application costs). Central supporting columns, 8 ft. high and 2 ft. in diameter have also been successfully veneered with "Formica."

By applying them directly on to the wall surface, the "Formica" panels can be formed to the required curves on the spot, whereas when a plywood backing is used both the backing board and the veneer have to be preformed at considerable cost in special veneer presses before being taken to the site. There are V joints between the panels to relieve the large areas of panelling. (Permatops Ltd., 12, Priests Bridge, London, SW 15)

#### PLASTIC CONDUIT

Faced with the shortage of steel tube and the extreme difficulty of finding galvanized conduit, readers may be interested in "Egatube" plastic conduit, which is available in  $\frac{5}{6}$  in.,  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. and 1 in. diameters at prices varying from 49s. 3d. to 106s. 6d. per 100 ft. All the usual fittings (also in plastic) are produced. Alternatively, the tube can be threaded for use with metal fittings, the only proviso being that a good die not previously used on steel tube must be used. Bends can be made by warming the tube (blow lamp or hot water) and supports are necessary at intervals of 3 or 4 ft. As it resists acid, the conduit is suitable for use in chemical works and where there are other corrosive atmospheres, but it is not recommended for use in temperatures exceeding 130° F. (Ega Electric Ltd., Holyhead Road, Wednesbury, Staffs.)

#### RADIATOR GRILLS IN CANE

The shortage and high price of metals has led to a search for alternative materials for the manufacture of such accessories as perforated radiator grilles and air vents, etc. One firm of craftsmen has been for some time making fittings of this kind in woven cane with considerable success. This material, more often seen in chair seats and backs, has qualities which make it suitable for a wide variety of uses. It is durable, easily kept clean, variable in design and shape, and can be painted or stained to suit any requirements. Delivery is also quick and the cost is low. Apart from radiator grilles, air vents, etc., it is easy to imagine a number of other applications. The material can be obtained in flat strip in a wide range of thicknesses and varying from 1.5 mm. wide to 3.8 mm. wide. Centre section cane (round) is available from 1.75 mm. to 3.5 mm. (George Prior (Chair Canes) Ltd., 2, Hugh Street, London, S.W.1.)

#### COLOURED FLOOR TILES

In co-operation with the British Colour Council, Semtex Ltd. have produced the "Vinyl" floor tile in an entirely new range of colours. Each colour in the range of 18 patterns is matched with the appropriate shade in the Council's dictionary of colours for interior decoration, including delicate tones not previously used in flooring materials. Introduced as a complement to the "Semastic" decorative tile, the "Vinyl" tile is particularly suitable for kitchens, bathrooms, cocktail bars and lounges, and for public rooms generally. The tiles can be laid over wooden sub-floors, and are free of building licence, which makes them especially suitable for reconstruction work.

(Semtex Ltd., 185 Finchley Road, London, N.W.3.)

#### A NEW SYNTHETIC PAINT

Most architects know that quite a number of the paints now on the market contain a synthetic resin base. Before the war only a few manufacturers were experimenting on these lines. Linseed is short, and the Korean war has cut off supplies of tung oil. As it is necessary to save foreign currency there is a need to develop synthetic paints which can be made from raw materials, such as coal and oil, which are available in this country.

oil, which are available in this country.

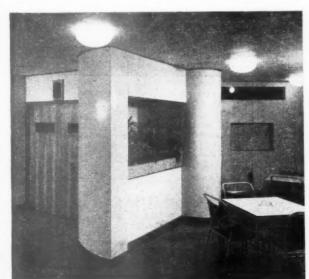
Styrene based paints are now coming on to the market and have the advantage of drying quickly. They will set free of dust and proof against frost in two or three hours, so that painting can often be carried on in winter when the use of paints based on natural oils would be impossible. The difficulty in producing styrene paint medium is making it mix with the other drying oils. This problem has now been solved by a large firm of paint manufacturers, who have had a factory built at Partington, Cheshire, where the styrene will be produced on a commercial scale. One example of these styrene paints is "Mirrosa" enamel, for which the manufacturers claim a considerable saving in labour and material costs. When considering the cost of painting it is better to think in terms of the yearly bill rather than the price per gallon. It is claimed that the paintwork of houses in a large UDC painted 3½ years ago with "Mirrosa" enamels is still in a very good condition.

The cost of "making ready" and applying paint is so great, compared with the cost of the paint itself, that money spent on a high quality paint is seldom wasted. (Sir W. A. Rose & Co. Ltd., Shepherds Lane, E.9.)

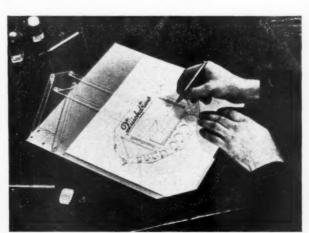
#### SIMPLIFIED SKETCHING

The "Quickdraw" has been designed to help in the production of rapid sketches. It has a board 14 in, square and a transparent template mounted on a parallel motion linkage. It will accommodate paper up to 13 in, by 10 in, and the case has a pocket to hold paper and oddments. The instrument operates in roughly the same way as full-size drawing machines. It is easy to use and vastly more efficient than sketching on the backs of envelopes. (The Quickdraw Co. 127, Gunnersbury Avenue, London, W.3.)

BRIAN GRANT



Left, part of the new BBC canteen at Bush House, where Permatops has applied plastic sheet by a new method. Below, the "Quickdraw" machine for easy drawing.



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### Buildings Illustrated

Bridgend Paper Mills for Wiggins, Teape & Co. (1919) Ltd.; at Llangynwyd, Nr. Bridgend, Glamorgan. (Pages 456-459.) Architect: Henry Budgen & Co. (now P. G. Budgen & Partners). Consultants: British Steel Reinforcement Co. Ltd. Electrical Consultants: J. D. Crozier. Quantity Surveyors: Henry Budgen & Co. (now E. R. Budgen & Partners). General contractors: Richard Costain Ltd. (superstructure); G. Percy Trentham Ltd. (siteworks). Clerk of works: H. W. Chaplin. General foreman: J. C. Norris. Sub-contractors: excavation, Richard Costain Ltd.; foundations, Pressure Piling: dampcourses, George M. Callender & Co. Ltd.; asphalt, John Dickinson (Bolton) Ltd.; reinforced concrete, G. Percy Trentham Ltd.; bricks & tiles. Tondu Brick Co. Ltd.; artificial stone, Penarth Concrete Co. Ltd.; artificial stone, Penarth Concrete Co. Ltd.; structural steel and iron staircases, Braithwaite & Co. Engineers Ltd.; fireproof construction and doors, Mather & Platt Ltd.; special roofings, William Briggs & Sons Ltd.; glass, Pilkington Bros. Ltd. (glass blocks), Bristow Wadley & Co. Ltd.; floor plates, Stelcon (Industrial Floors) Ltd.; plastic tiles, Semtex Ltd.; asphalt, John Dickinson (Bolton) Ltd.; waterproofing materials, Tretolene Ltd (to precast stanchion encasures); central heating, Carrier-Ross Engineering Co. Ltd. (Consultants); cooking and kitchen installation, Benham & Sons Ltd.; electric wiring, Holliday Hall & Stinson (Western) Ltd. (contractors); electric light fixtures, General Electric Co. Ltd.; ventilation, Carrier-Ross

Engineering Co. Ltd.; plumbing, Richardson's Power Piping (machines and office block main runs), Messrs. J. C. Hitt of Bridgend (domestic in offices, etc); sanitary fittings. Associated Clay Industries Ltd.; stairtreads (terrazzo) Cardiff Mosaic Ltd.; casements and window furniture, Henry Hope & Sons Ltd.; telephones, G.P.O.; folding gates, Bolton Gate Co. Ltd.; rolling shutters, metalwork, Haskins; sunblinds, J. Avery & Co.; plaster, Messrs. Hawkins & Holmes; joinery, Messrs. Herberts; furniture (laboratory fittings), A. Gallenkamp & Co. Ltd.; shrubs and trees, William Wood & Sons; office fittings, Roneo Ltd.; cloakroom fittings, James Gibbons; lifts, Bennie Lifts Ltd.; cranes, Vaughan Crane Co. Ltd.; water supply, Mid-Glämorgan Water Board.

"No-Fines" Concrete Houses at Eastcote, Middlesex. (March 27, 1952, pp. 388-389.) The paint used for these houses was "Syndura," Grade "E"—a new plastic emulsion coating, manufactured by Fleetwood Paints Ltd., Stet House, Park Gate Road, SW.11. The sub-contractor for the painting was C. Hastings of West Drayton. (General contractors: George Wimpey & Co. Ltd.)

#### Announcements

The dismantling of the Dome of Discovery and ten other buildings at the Festival of Britain site has been entrusted to George Cohen, Sons & Co. Ltd., the engineers and iron and metal merchants, who are the parent concern of The 600 Group of Companies

Mr. Darcy Braddell, F.R.I.B.A., has taken into partnership Mr. P. H. Laurence, A.R.I.B.A. The practice will continue at

6, Bedford Row, W.C.1, under the style of Braddell & Laurence.

Mr. D. C. Denton-Smith, L.R.I.B.A., 40, Regent Street, Cambridge, has taken into partnership Mr. Norman Russell, A.R.I.B.A., and Miss Mary H. Davey, A.R.I.B.A. from which date the practice will be continued under the style of "D. C. Denton-Smith & Partners, Chartered Architects: Surveyors," the office address and telephone numbers remaining unchanged.

Mr. C. J. Pell, B.SC., M.INST.C.E., M.I.STRUCT.E., consulting engineer, of 4, Manchester Square, W.l, has taken into partnership Mr. M. M. Khan, B.Sc., A.M.INST.C.E., M.I.STRUCT.E. and Mr. F. S. Rowe, A.M.I.STRUCT.E. The firm is now C. J. Pell & Partners.

Messrs. J. W. Gray & Son, Ltd., church spire restorers and lightning conductor specialists, of Franklin House, 37, Red Lion Street, High Holborn, W.C.1, have opened a branch office at 13, Castle Street, Salisbury, Wilts. (Tel.: Salisbury 2750.)

Eeta Insulations, of Bolton, the manufacturers of insulating jackets, have now completed the erection of new workshops, to replace the extensive damage caused by a fire last year, and full production has now been resumed. In addition to the standard range of heat insulating jackets, a new type has been introduced. This is provided with an outer cover of plastic, specially developed to withstand prolonged heat up to boiling point.

#### Correction

In a recent announcement made on this page the address of Mr. Frederick Iddison, A.I.A.S., was wrongly given. It is 68, Neville Road, Darlington, Co. Durham.



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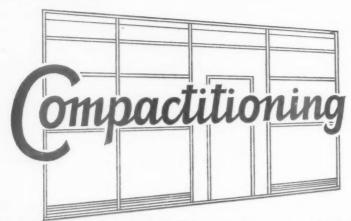
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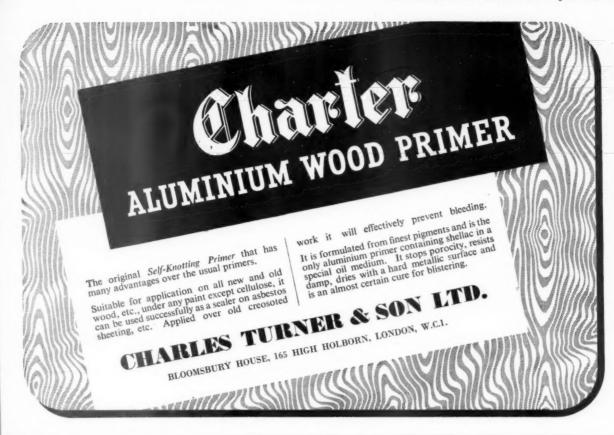
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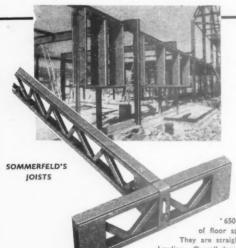
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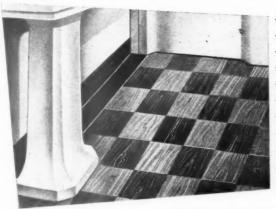
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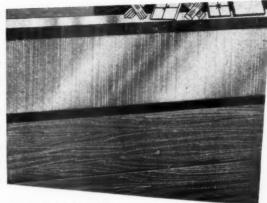
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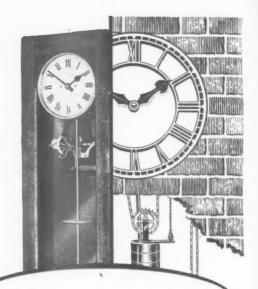
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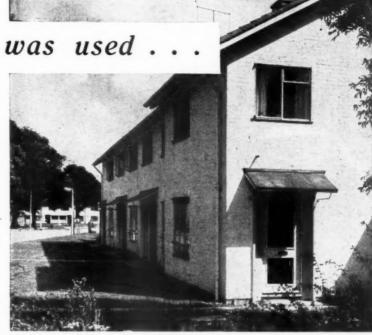
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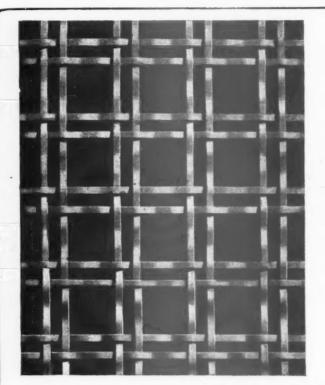
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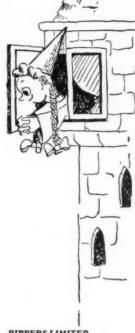
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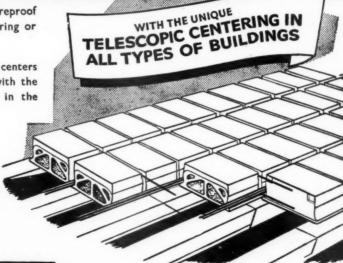
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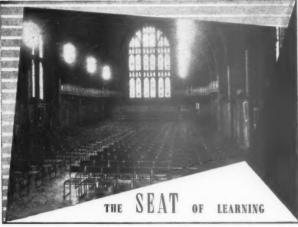
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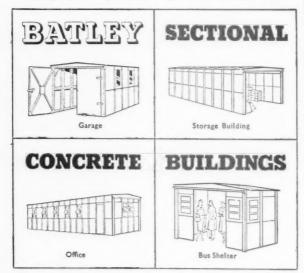
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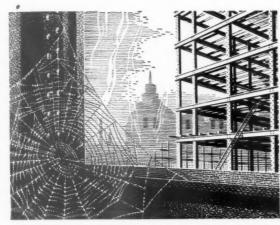
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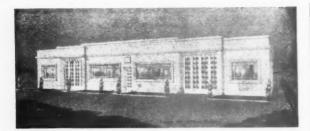
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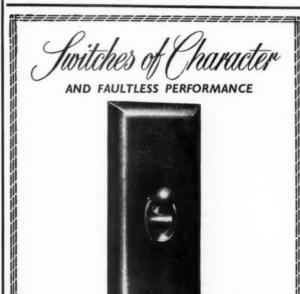
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JOHN KELLY, 
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County Buildings, Huntington. 9th April, 1952.

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III." stating age, qualifications and experience,
with copies of not more than three testimonials,
should reach the undersigned not later than first
post on Tuesday, 15th April, 152.

Canvassing will disqualify, and applicants must
disclose in writing any relationship to any
member or senior officer of the Council.

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Grays, Essex.

6646

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Applications are invited for this permanent appointment, at a salary in accordance with Grades A.P.T. V(a)-VI (£600-£710), plus London weighting allowance. The commencing salary may be fixed at a point above the minimum, according to the qualifications and experience of the successful candidate.

Candidates must have had a good general experience in design and construction, and hold an appropriate professional qualification.

The successful candidate will be required to undertake the oversight of the maintenance of Council's properties, including the preparation of specifications for and the technical supervision of repairs, alterations and improvements, in addition to general architectural work.

Conditions of appointment and application form may be obtained from the undersigned upon receipt of a stamped addressed foolscap envelope.

Completed application forms, endorsed "Assistant Architect," must be returned not later than first post on 21st April, 1952. The Council is unable to provide any housing accommodation for the successful candidate.

Town Clerk.

Town Clerk.

Town Clerk.

25th March, 1952. 6645

Town Hall, Hackney, E.8. 25th March, 1952.

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HOUSING DEPARTMENT.

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Staff of the County Housing Architect and Engineer (Hamilton).

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(Hamilton). Housing Architect and Engineer (Hamilton). Appointments range from a Junior to Senior capacity, and salary will be in accordance with the J.I.C. Scheme of Salaries and Conditions of Service, ranging from A.P.T., Grade I (£430-£475) to A.P.T., Grade VIII (£735-£810). If preferred, appointment can be a temporary one. Candidates for Senior post should have experience in the design and construction of large housing developments. Although the salary grade and scale will be discussed and adjusted at the interview by selected candidates, written applications should indicate the preference compatible with the qualifications of the applicant. Canvassing, directly or indirectly, will be a disqualification.

of the applicant.
Canvassing, directly or indirectly, will be a disqualification.
Applicants will be subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superannuation (Scotland) Act, 1937, and successful applicants will require to pass a medical examination.
Applications, stating age, particulars of experience and qualifications, and accompanied by the names and addresses of three referees, to whom reference may be made, should be lodged with S. McColl, A.R.I.B.A., F.R.I.A.S. County Housing Architect and Engineer, 23, Beckford Street, Hamilton, not later than 30th April, 1932.

WM. C. BROWNLIE,
County Clerk.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

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B. E. LAWRENCE, Chief Education Officer.

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Applications are invited for the appointment of Chief Architectural Assistant, salary A.P.T., Grade V (£570-£620 per annum).
Applicants must be well experienced in the design and construction of dwelling houses and in the preparation and administration of housing and general building contracts.
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and to the passing of a medical examination and will be terminable by one month's notice on either side.

Applications must be submitted on the forms to be obtained from the Borough Surveyor, Mr. F. R. Dinnis, A.M.I.C.E., Guildhall, Shrewsbury, and must be received by him not later than Monday, 28th April, 1952.

S. R. H. LONTON.

Town Clerk.

Guildhall, Shrewsbury. 2nd April, 1952.

#### Architectural Appointments Vacant 4 lines or under, 7s. 6d.; each additional line, 2s.

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of Vacancies Order, 1952.

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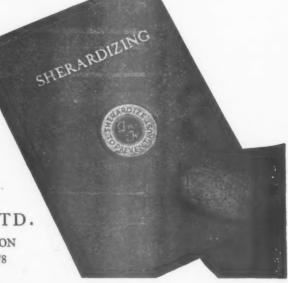
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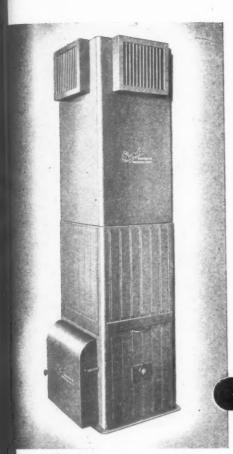
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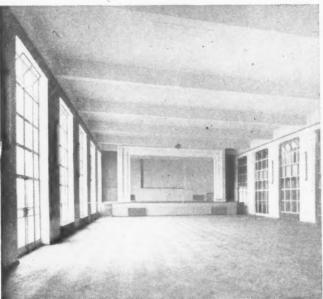


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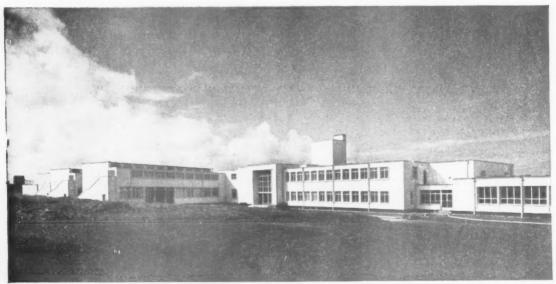
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